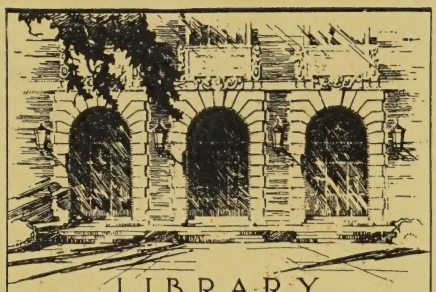
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THE CONFESSIONS OF JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU

A complete list of the
BORZOI CLASSICS
uniform with this volume
appears on the last page

THE CONFESSIONS OF JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU

Translated from the French

With a preface by
EDMUND WILSON

VOLUME I

LONDON
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PREFACE

ROUSSEAU'S *Confessions* is the first great document of its kind in the modern world; it is the first great romantic autobiography. It may seem strange to us nowadays, when we are surfeited with confessions — when fiction has come more and more to take the form of rambling autobiography and when everyone, of however humble eminence, writes at some time or other the "story of his life" — that such a narrative as Rousseau's should ever have been a novelty. Yet it is a fact that the peculiar romantic interest in personality which has drenched literature ever since, had its first important expression in Rousseau. Hitherto — before the latter half of the eighteenth century — the most violent emotions of men had tended to crystallize in objective works of art, as the passionate storms of Swift were compressed into pamphlets and satires and the sensibility of Racine was chiseled in the marble of classical tragedies. But at the advent of Rousseau, with his new motto, *Intus et in cute*, the simple record of one's feelings and impressions became an end and a form in itself; you assumed that a thing was interesting, not by virtue of its absolute importance, but because it had happened to you, and you assumed that the things that happened inside you were more important than the things you actually did. When Byron comes to vent his emotions he will produce no really objective masterpiece, like Swift or Racine; he will merely give out a strong emanation of personality, the smoky fumes of escaping passions, an attitude, a pose, a temperament, abounding simply in the sense of

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its own will. The very phenomena of the landscape and the seasons — which have hitherto been regarded as rather uninteresting — will be absorbed by the subjective life till they seem almost to share some sympathy with it. On one of the very first pages of the *Confessions* Rousseau tells of hearing the swallows which had come twittering outside the window when as a boy he had sat up all night reading, and, as Sainte-Beuve has said, they announced more than the coming of morning: they were the heralds of the whole flamboyant summer of modern romanticism. Contrast Rousseau's *Confessions* with Voltaire's autobiographical fragment — a typical document of the eighteenth century: the brisk bright running notes of the latter are all of public affairs and public people; when they decline from an impersonal attitude it is only for a tincture of malice. But in Rousseau it is Rousseau we hear about, rarely ever society or politics; and we sometimes get the impression that Rousseau's individual soul is more precious than either politics or society.

Yet it is precisely Rousseau's political and social eminence which makes his *Confessions* the most important book of their kind. Never has a figure of equal significance left a record equally candid and complete. We shall best appreciate them if we regard them not merely as a picaresque narrative nor as one of the frankest and most fascinating documents on the life of the eighteenth century, but chiefly as the soil of experience which fed the roots of a great tree of political impulse — a tree which with rude natural strength split the neat pavements of a feudal society and now more than a hundred years after spreads its ramifications through the world. For, though among the philosophers and journalists of the Enlightenment there were many cleverer and more accomplished than Rousseau, there was none who commanded a more formidable power. They, like him, were

bent upon the destruction of the *ancien régime*, but they were inextricably bound up with it; after all, in accepting its culture and in mingling with its society, they were aristocratic themselves. But Rousseau had come in from outside, he had struggled up from below; he was a Swiss, a provincial and a Protestant in a society where even the opposition was French, Catholic and urbane. He was the real witness for the people, the man who had really seen the social structure from belowstairs; and no deficiencies of education, no faults of taste or confusions of logic could ever nullify the superiority of the force which he derived from his unique position.

Here again he will seem less striking to us nowadays than he did to his own time. We are used to Rousseaus now: they start up on every hand; they are the leaders of the labor movements and the voices of the liberal press. H. G. Wells, for example, is nothing more nor less than Rousseau a hundred years after: you have the same romantic fever, the same dazzling political visions, the same imperfect cultural equipment in a mind extremely well informed and the same inflaming of social theories by obsessions of personal resentment; *Tono-Bungay* and *The New Machiavelli* have really much in common with the *Confessions*, as the spirit of *Joan and Peter* has with that of *Émile;* and it is even possible to recognize in the imperfect sympathy between Wells and Shaw a repetition of the conflict of temperaments between those two other great leaders on the same side, Rousseau and Voltaire. Like Rousseau, Wells is a rhapsodist, a democratic prophet; like Voltaire, Shaw is an intellectual, disdainful of the confusions of emotion. Does not the exasperated cry of Shaw in one of his public controversies with Wells, "What are you to do with a man who has a new idea every day, and always lets it run away with him in a new direction?" seem an echo of

Voltaire's cold mock pity in *L'Homme aux Quarante Écus:* "Let us pardon that poor Jean-Jacques when he writes only to contradict himself; when after having had a comedy hissed in the theatre at Paris, he abuses people who put comedies on a hundred miles away; when he seeks out protectors and then outrages them; when he holds forth against novels and then writes novels with a silly preceptor for a hero, who takes money from a Swiss lady to whom he has given a child and then goes off to spend it in a Paris brothel: let us allow him to believe that he has surpassed Fénelon and Xenophon in bringing up a young man of quality in the trade of a carpenter: these extravagant platitudes do not merit a warrant for his arrest . . ."? Yet the poor Jean-Jacques had not only — for all his self-contradictions — more driving force than Voltaire, who conducted his campaign with far lighter weapons, but he has never been equalled by any of the subsequent prophets to whom he has transmitted his mantle. We have all a little of Rousseau nowadays; it is easy to catch what is in the air. The remarkable thing was to create in the first place both the new prophetic point of view and the new language for expressing it.

Yet, as I have suggested, Rousseau the prophet figures little in the *Confessions* and it may perhaps be worth while for me to supplement them with a note on the subject here. For, though it is no doubt natural that a document which Rousseau intended as an apology for his personal conduct should contain no record of the growth of his ideas, it is unfortunate that, in addition, the great climax of his intellectual life should receive in his autobiography rather unsatisfactory treatment. This dramatic incident — almost as startling and almost as far-reaching in its effects as the sudden conversion of Paul on his journey to Damascus — Rousseau excuses himself

from elaborating on the ground that he has already written it and that what he has already written he is no longer able to remember: he had already described it at length in a letter to M. de Malesherbes. And this passage, as it belongs properly to the *Confessions*, may be appropriately transcribed here. Rousseau, then thirty-seven years old and still a struggling young copyist and composer, was on the road from Paris to Vincennes on a hot summer day; as he walked he read the *Mercure de France* to prevent his hurrying too fast and so exhausting himself in the heat, and his eye happened to fall upon a notice which announced that the Academy of Dijon were offering a prize for the best essay upon the following question: "Has the progress of the arts and sciences contributed to corrupt or to purify society?" "If ever anything resembled a sudden inspiration," he writes, "it was the movement which began in me as I read this. All at once I felt myself dazzled by a thousand sparkling lights; crowds of vivid ideas thronged into my mind with a force and confusion that threw me into an unspeakable agitation; I felt my head whirling in a giddiness like that of intoxication. A violent palpitation oppressed me; unable to walk for difficulty of breathing, I sank under one of the trees of the avenue, and passed half an hour there in such a condition of excitement that when I arose I saw that the front of my waistcoat was all wet with my tears, though I was wholly unconscious of shedding them. Ah, if I could ever have written a quarter of what I saw and felt, under that tree, with what clearness should I have revealed all the contradictions of the social system . . . with what simplicity should I have demonstrated that *man is naturally good and that it is through institutions alone that men have become wicked!*"

This moment was the real point of departure of the modern democratic movement. As it came almost pre-

cisely in the centre, so it was the turning-point of the eighteenth century. All Rousseau's political works, from the *Discours* to the *Contrat Social*, stemmed from this sudden inspiration; it never occurred to him to wonder how, if men were good, they had invented bad institutions; he had the blind force of religious faith. And all Europe was soon to be aroused by the conception of the natural man, of the man naturally good, of the good man oppressed by laws and debauched by civilization, and to put to itself the question which Rousseau was soon to ask: Do the inequalities of men in society correspond to their natural inequalities? That question and that conception were to be debated long and with much bloodshed; they are still being debated to-day on every hand: between the Fascisti and the Socialists in Italy, between the Communists and the Monarchists in Berlin, between the government of Soviet Russia and the governments of the Allies, and in America between the masters of the steel industry and Mr. William Z. Foster's strikers. The train was already started on that hot day in 1749: already the fuse was lit which was to fire the phrases of the Declaration of Independence, which was to burn down the Bastille in the conflagration of a whole society, and which was to warm the Red Armies of Russia as they fought for Communism in the snow — when it was suddenly revealed to Rousseau, the clock-maker's son of Geneva, the beaten apprentice, the thieving lackey, the vagabond of the roads, that all his shames and misfortunes had been due not to his own innate perversity but to the corruption of the society which had bred him; and that mankind, who seemed haunted by the memory of some inheritance of happiness and freedom which they had long ago enjoyed, might, if they could only reconstruct institutions, become happy and free again.

EDMUND WILSON.

THE CONFESSIONS OF JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU

VOLUME I

PART ONE

BOOK I

[1712–1719]

I HAVE entered on a performance which is without example, whose accomplishment will have no imitator. I mean to present my fellow-mortals with a man in all the integrity of nature; and this man shall be myself. I alone. I know my heart, and have studied mankind; I am not made like any one I have been acquainted with, perhaps like no one in existence; if not better, I at least claim originality, and whether Nature did wisely in breaking the mould in which she formed me can only be determined after having read this work.

Whenever the last trumpet shall sound, I will present myself before the Sovereign Judge with this book in my hand, and say aloud, Thus have I acted; these were my thoughts; such was I. With equal freedom and veracity have I related what was laudable or wicked; I have concealed no crimes, added no virtues; and if I have sometimes introduced superfluous ornament, it was merely to occupy a void occasioned by defect of memory. I may have supposed that certain which I only knew to be probable, but have never asserted as truth a conscious falsehood. Such as I was, I have declared myself; sometimes vile and despicable, at others virtuous, generous, and sublime — even as Thou hast read my inmost soul, Power eternal! Assemble round Thy throne an

innumerable throng of my fellow-mortals, let them listen to my confessions, let them grieve at my indignities, let them blush at my miseries; let each in his turn expose with equal sincerity at the foot of Thy throne the wanderings of his heart, and, if he dare, aver, 'I was better than that man.'

I was born in Geneva, in 1712, son of Isaac Rousseau and Susanne Bernard, citizens. My father's share of a moderate competency, which was divided among fifteen children, being very trivial, his business of a watchmaker (in which he was indeed expert) was his only dependence. My mother's circumstances were more affluent; she was the daughter of a Monsieur Bernard, minister, and possessed both modesty and beauty; indeed, my father found some difficulty in obtaining her hand.

The affection they entertained for each other was almost as early as their existence; at eight or nine years old they walked together every evening on the banks of the Treille, and before they were ten could not support the idea of separation. A natural sympathy of soul confirmed those sentiments which habit at first produced. Born with minds susceptible of exquisite sensibility and tenderness, each only awaited the encounter of a kindred disposition; — rather, perhaps, should I say, the happy moment awaited them, when each surrendered a willing heart. The obstacles that opposed served only to give a degree of vivacity to their affection; and the young lover, not being able to obtain his mistress, was overwhelmed with sorrow. She advised him to travel that he might forget her. He consented; he travelled, but returned more passionate than ever, and found her equally constant, equally tender. After this proof of mutual affection, what could they resolve? — to dedicate their future lives to love! the resolution was ratified with a vow, on which Heaven shed its benediction.

My mother's brother, Gabriel Bernard, fell in love with one of my father's sisters: she had no objection to the match, but made the marriage of his sister with her brother an indispensable preliminary. Love soon removed every obstacle, and the two weddings were celebrated on the same day: thus my uncle became the husband of my aunt, and their children were doubly my cousins-german. Before a year was expired both had the happiness to become fathers but were soon afterwards obliged to submit to a separation.

My uncle Bernard, who was an engineer, went to serve in the Empire and Hungary under Prince Eugene, and distinguished himself both at the siege and battle of Belgrade. My father, after the birth of my only brother, set off, on recommendation, for Constantinople, and was appointed watchmaker to the Seraglio. During his absence, the beauty, wit, and accomplishments [1] of my mother attracted a number of admirers, among whom Monsieur de La Closure, Resident of France, was the most assiduous in his attentions. His passion must have been extremely violent, since after a period of thirty years I have seen him affected whenever we spoke of her. My mother had a defence more powerful even than her virtue: she tenderly loved my father, and conjured him to return; he sacrificed all, and did so. I was the unfor-

[1] They were too brilliant for her situation, the minister, her father, who loved her dearly, having bestowed great pains on her education. She was taught drawing, singing, and to play on the theorbo; had learning, and wrote agreeable verses. The following is an extempore piece which she composed in the absence of her brother and husband, in a conversation with some person concerning them, while walking with her sister-in-law and their two children:

'Ces deux messieurs qui sont absents
Nous sont chers de bien des manières;
Ce sont nos amis, nos amants,
Ce sont nos maris et nos frères,
Et les pères de ces enfants.' — R.

tunate fruit of this return, being born ten months after, in a very weakly and infirm state; my birth cost my mother her life, and was the first of my misfortunes.

I am ignorant how my father supported her loss at that time, but I know he was ever after inconsolable. In me he still thought he saw her, but could never forget I had been the innocent cause of his misfortune; nor did he ever embrace me but his sighs, the convulsive pressure of his arms, witnessed that a bitter regret mingled with his caresses, though, as may be supposed, they were not on this account less tender. When he said to me, 'Jean-Jacques, let us talk of your mother,' my usual reply was, 'Yes, father, but then you know we shall cry,' and immediately the tears started from his eyes. 'Ah!' exclaimed he, with agitation, 'give her back to me; at least console me for her loss; fill up the void she has left in my soul. Could I love thee thus wert thou only *my* son?' Forty years after this loss he expired in the arms of a second wife, but the name of the first still vibrated on his lips — still was her image engraven on his heart.

Such were the authors of my being: of all the gifts it had pleased Heaven to bestow on them, a feeling heart was the only one that descended to me; this had been the source of their felicity — it was the foundation of all my misfortunes.

I came into the world with so few signs of life that they entertained but little hope of preserving me. I brought with me the seeds of a disorder that has gathered strength with years, and from which I am now relieved at intervals, only to suffer a different, though more intolerable, evil. I owed my preservation to one of my father's sisters, an amiable and virtuous girl, who took the most tender care of me; she is yet living, nursing, at the age of fourscore, a husband younger than herself, but worn out

with excessive drinking. Dear aunt! I freely forgive your having preserved my life, and lament that it is not in my power to bestow on the decline of your days the tender solicitude and care you lavished on the first dawn of mine.[1] My nurse, Jaqueline, is likewise living, and in good health — the hands that opened my eyes to the light of this world may close them at my death.

I suffered before I thought; it is the common lot of humanity. I experienced more than my proportion of it. I have no knowledge of what passed prior to my fifth or sixth year. I recollect nothing of learning to read; I only remember what effect the first considerable exercise of it produced on my mind; from that moment I date an uninterrupted knowledge of myself. Every night, after supper, my father and I read some part of a collection of romances which had been my mother's. My father's design was only to improve me in reading, and he thought these entertaining works were calculated to give me a fondness for it; but we soon found ourselves so interested in the adventures they contained, that we alternately read whole nights together, and could not bear to give over until at the conclusion of a volume. Sometimes, in the morning, on hearing the swallows at our window, my father, quite ashamed of this weakness, would cry, 'Come, let us go to bed; I am more a child than thou art.'

I soon acquired, by this dangerous custom, not only an extreme facility in reading and comprehending, but, for my age, a too intimate acquaintance with the passions. An infinity of sensations were familiar to me, without possessing any precise idea of the objects to which they

[1] Her name was Madame Gonceru. In March 1767 Rousseau conferred on her a pension of 100 livres, and, even when sorely distressed himself, paid it regularly.

related — I had conceived nothing — I had felt the whole. This confused succession of emotions which crowded upon my mind did not retard the future efforts of my reason, though they added an extravagant, romantic notion of human life, which experience and reflection have never been able wholly to eradicate.

[1719–1723.] My romance-reading concluded with the summer of 1719; the following winter was differently employed. My mother's library being exhausted, we had recourse to that part of her father's which had devolved to us; here we happily found some valuable books, nor could this be otherwise, having been selected by a minister who truly deserved that title, in whom learning (which was the fashion of the times) was but a secondary commendation, his taste and good sense being most conspicuous. The *History of the Church and Empire* by Le Sueur, Bossuet's *Discourse on Universal History*, Plutarch's *Lives*, *The History of Venice* by Nani, *Ovid's Metamorphoses*, La Bruyère, Fontenelle's *Worlds*, his *Dialogues of the Dead*, and a few volumes of Molière, were soon ranged in my father's closet, where, during the hours he was employed in his business, I daily read them, with an avidity and taste uncommon, perhaps unprecedented, at my age. Plutarch above all became my greatest favourite. The satisfaction I derived from the repeated reading of this author extinguished my passion for romances, and I shortly preferred Agesilaus, Brutus, and Aristides, to Orondates, Artamenes, and Juba. These interesting studies, seconded by the conversations they frequently occasioned with my father, produced that republican spirit and love of liberty, that haughty and invincible turn of mind, which rendered me impatient of restraint or servitude, and became the torment of my life, as I continually found myself in situations incom-

patible with these sentiments. Incessantly occupied with Rome and Athens, conversing, if I may so express myself, with their illustrious heroes; born the citizen of a republic, of a father whose ruling passion was the love of his country, I was fired with these examples; could fancy myself a Greek or Roman, and readily enter into the character of the personage whose life I read; transported by the recital of any extraordinary instance of fortitude or intrepidity, animation flashed from my eyes, and gave my voice additional strength and energy. One day, at table, while relating the episode of Scævola, they were terrified at seeing me start from my seat and hold my hand over a hot chafing-dish, to represent more forcibly the action.

My brother, who was seven years older than myself, was brought up to my father's profession. The extraordinary affection they lavished on me caused him to be somewhat neglected: this certainly was a fault which cannot be justified. His education and morals suffered by this neglect, and he acquired the habits of a libertine before he arrived at an age to be really one. He was placed under another master, but his escapades were as numerous as when he lived at home. Though I saw him so seldom that it could hardly be said we were acquainted, I loved him tenderly, and believe he had as strong an affection for me as a scapegrace is capable of. One day, I remember, when my father was correcting him severely, I threw myself between them, embracing my brother, whom I covered with my body, receiving the strokes designed for him. I persisted so obstinately in my protection, that, either softened by my cries and tears, or fearing to hurt me most, his anger subsided, and he pardoned his fault. In the end, my brother's conduct became so bad that he suddenly disappeared, and we learned some time after that he was in Germany; but he

never wrote to us, and from that day we heard no news of him: thus I became an only son.

If this poor lad was ill reared, it was quite different with his brother, for the children of a king could not be treated with more attention and tenderness than were bestowed on my infancy, being the darling of the family, and, what is rather uncommon, though treated as a beloved, never a spoiled child; was never permitted, while under the paternal roof, to play in the street with other children; never had any occasion to contradict or indulge those fantastical humours which are usually attributed to nature, but are in reality the effects of education. I had the faults common to my age; was talkative, a glutton, and sometimes a liar; made no scruple of stealing sweetmeats, fruits, or, indeed, any kind of eatables; but never took delight in ill-doing, in mischievous waste, in accusing others, or tormenting harmless animals. I recollect, indeed, that one day, while Madame Clot, a neighbour of ours, was gone to church, I made water in her kettle; the remembrance even now makes me smile, for Madame Clot (though, if you please, a good sort of creature) was one of the most grumbling old women I ever knew. Thus have I given a brief but faithful history of my childish transgressions.

How could I become cruel or vicious, when I had before my eyes only examples of mildness, and was surrounded by some of the best people in the world? My father, my aunt, my nurse, my relations, our friends, our neighbours, all I had any connection with, did not obey me, it is true, but loved me tenderly, and I returned their affection. I found so little to excite my desires, and those I had were so seldom contradicted, that I was hardly sensible of possessing any, and can solemnly aver I was an absolute stranger to caprice until after I

had experienced the authority of a master. Those hours that were not employed in reading or writing with my father, or walking with my governess, I spent with my aunt; and whether seeing her embroider or hearing her sing, whether sitting or standing by her side, I was ever happy. Her tenderness and unaffected gaiety, the charms of her countenance, have left such indelible impressions on my mind, that her manner, look, and attitude are still before my eyes; I recollect her little caressing questions; could describe her clothes, her headdress, nor have the two curls of black hair which hung on her temples, according to the mode of that time, escaped my memory.

Though my taste, or rather passion, for music did not show itself until a considerable time after, I am fully persuaded it is to her I am indebted for it. She knew a great number of songs, which she sang with great sweetness and melody. The serenity and cheerfulness which were conspicuous in this lovely girl banished melancholy, and made all around her happy. The charms of her voice had such an effect on me that not only several of her songs have ever since remained on my memory, but, now when I have lost it, some I have not thought of from my infancy, as I grow old return upon my mind with a charm altogether inexpressible. Would any one believe that an old dotard like me, worn out with care and infirmity, should sometimes surprise himself weeping like a child, and in a voice querulous and broken by age, muttering out one of those airs which were the favourites of my infancy? There is one song in particular, whose tune I perfectly recollect, but the words that compose the latter half of it constantly refuse every effort to recall them, though I have a confused idea of the rhymes. The beginning, with what I have been able to recollect of the remainder, is as follows: —

Tircis, je n'ose
Ecouter ton chalumeau
Sous l'ormeau;
Car on en cause
Déjà dans notre hameau.
. . . . . .
. . . . . un berger
. . . . . s'engager
. . . . . sans danger,
Et toujours l'épine est sous la rose.[1]

I have endeavoured to account for the invincible charm my heart feels at the recollection of this fragment, but it is altogether inexplicable; I only know that before I get to the end of it I always find my voice interrupted by tenderness, and my eyes suffused with tears. I have a hundred times formed the resolution of writing to Paris for the remainder of these words, if any one should chance to know them; but I am almost certain the pleasure I take in the recollection would be greatly diminished were I assured any one but my poor aunt Suson had sung them.

Such were my affections on entering this life. Thus began to form and demonstrate itself a heart at once haughty and tender, a character effeminate, yet invincible; which, fluctuating between weakness and courage, ease and virtue, has ever set me in contradiction to myself, causing abstinence and enjoyment, pleasure and prudence, equally to shun me.

This course of education was interrupted by an accident

[1] This song is still popular amongst the working class in Paris:

'Tircis, je n'ose
Ecouter ton chalumeau
Sous l'ormeau;
Car on en cause
Déjà dans notre hameau.
Un cœur s'expose
A trop s'engager
Avec un berger,
Et toujours l'épine est sous la rose.'

whose consequences influenced the rest of my life. My father had a quarrel with Monsieur Gautier, who had a captain's commission in France, and was related to several of the Council. This Gautier, who was an insolent, ill-bred man, happening to bleed at the nose, in order to be revenged accused my father of having drawn his sword on him in the city, and in consequence of this charge they were about to conduct my father to prison. He insisted (according to the law of the republic) that the accuser should be confined at the same time; and, not being able to obtain this, preferred to quit Geneva and undergo a voluntary banishment for the remainder of his life, to giving up a point by which he must sacrifice his honour and liberty.

I remained under the tuition of my uncle Bernard, who was at that time employed in the fortifications of Geneva. He had lost his eldest daughter, but had a son about my own age, and we were sent together to Bossey, to board with the Minister Lambercier. Here we were to learn Latin, with all the insignificant trash that has obtained the name of education.

Two years spent in this village softened, in some degree, my Roman fierceness, and again reduced me to a state of childhood. At Geneva, where nothing was exacted, I loved study and reading, almost, indeed, my sole amusement; but at Bossey, where application was expected, I was fond of play as a relaxation. The country was so new, so charming in my idea, that it seemed impossible to find satiety in its enjoyment, and I conceived a passion for rural life which time has not been able to extinguish; nor have I ever ceased to regret the pure and tranquil pleasures I enjoyed at this place in my childhood, the remembrance having followed me through every age, even to that in which I am hastening again towards it. Monsieur Lambercier was a worthy, sensible man, who,

without neglecting our instruction, never made our tasks burthensome. What convinces me of the rectitude of his method is, that notwithstanding my extreme aversion to restraint, the recollection of my studies is never attended with disgust; and, if my improvement under him was trivial, it was obtained with ease, and has never escaped memory.

The simplicity of this rural life was of infinite advantage in opening my heart to the reception of true friendship. The sentiments I had hitherto formed on this subject were extremely elevated, but altogether imaginary. The habit of living in this peaceful manner united me tenderly to my cousin Bernard; my affection was more ardent than that I had felt for my brother, nor has time ever been able to efface it. He was a tall, lank, weakly boy, with a mind as soft as his body was feeble, and who did not wrong the good opinion they were disposed to entertain for the son of my guardian. Our studies, amusements, and tastes were the same; we were alone, of equal age, and each wanted a playmate; to separate would, in some measure, have been to annihilate us. Though we had not many opportunities of demonstrating our attachment to each other, it was certainly extreme; and so far from enduring the thought of separation, we could not even form an idea that we should ever be able to submit to it. Each of a disposition to be won by kindness, and complaisant when not soured by contradiction, we agreed in every particular. If, by the favour of those who governed us, he had the ascendant while in their presence, I was sure to acquire it when we were alone, and this preserved the equilibrium. If he hesitated in repeating his task, I prompted him; when my exercise was finished, I helped to write his; and, in our amusements, my disposition being most active, served him as a guide. In a word, our characters accorded so well, and the friendship that

subsisted between us was so cordial, that during the five years we were at Bossey and Geneva we were inseparable: we often fought, it is true, but there never was any occasion to separate us. No one of our quarrels lasted more than a quarter of an hour, and never in our lives did we make any complaint of each other. It may be said, these remarks are frivolous; but, perhaps, a similar example among children can hardly be produced.

The manner in which I passed my time at Bossey was so agreeable to my disposition that it only required a longer duration absolutely to have fixed my character, which would have had only peaceable, affectionate, benevolent sentiments for its basis. I believe no individual of our kind ever possessed less natural vanity than myself. At intervals, by an extraordinary effort, I arrived at sublime ideas, but presently sank again into my original languor. To be beloved by every one who knew me was my most ardent wish. I was naturally mild, my cousin was equally so, and those who had the care of us were of similar dispositions. Everything contributed to strengthen those propensities which nature had implanted in my breast, and during the two years I was neither the witness nor victim of any violent emotions. I knew nothing so delightful as to see every one content, not only with me, but all that concerned them. I remember that when repeating our catechism at church, nothing could give me greater vexation, on being obliged to hesitate, than to see Mademoiselle Lambercier's looks express disapprobation and uneasiness. This alone was more afflicting to me than the shame of faltering before so many witnesses, which, notwithstanding, was sufficiently painful; for, though not over-solicitous of praise, I was feelingly alive to shame; yet I can truly affirm, the dread of being reprimanded by Mademoiselle Lambercier alarmed me less than the thought of making her uneasy.

Neither she nor her brother was deficient in a reasonable severity, but as this severity, almost always just, was never passionate, I grieved, but never rebelled against it; I was more afflicted at their disapprobation than the punishment. Certainly the method of treating youth would be altered if the distant effects this indiscriminate and frequently indiscreet method produces were more conspicuous. I would willingly excuse myself from a further explanation, did not the lesson this example conveys (which points out an evil as frequent as it is pernicious) forbid my silence.

As Mademoiselle Lambercier felt a mother's affection, she sometimes exerted a mother's authority, even to inflicting on us, when we deserved it, the punishment of infants. She had often threatened it, and this threat of a treatment entirely new appeared to me extremely dreadful; but I found the reality much less terrible than the idea, and, what is still more unaccountable, this punishment increased my affection for the person who had inflicted it. All this affection, aided by my natural mildness, was scarcely sufficient to prevent my seeking, by fresh offences, a return of the same chastisement; for a degree of sensuality had mingled with the smart and shame, which left more desire than fear of a repetition. It is true that, as a precocious sexual instinct influenced me in this, similar chastisement from her brother's hand would have been the reverse of pleasing; but from a man of his disposition this was not probable, and if I abstained from meriting correction, it was merely from a fear of offending Mademoiselle Lambercier; for benevolence, even when prompted by the passions, has ever maintained an empire over me which has given law to my heart.

This relapse, which, though desirable, I had not endeavoured to accelerate, arrived without my fault — I should say, without my seeking, — and I profited by it

with a safe conscience; but this second was also the last time, for Mademoiselle Lambercier, who doubtless had some reason to imagine this chastisement did not produce the desired effect, declared it was too fatiguing, and that she renounced it for the future. Till now we had slept in her chamber, and, during the winter, even in her bed; but two days after another room was prepared for us, and from that moment I had the honour (which I could very well have dispensed with) of being treated by her as a great boy.

Who would believe this childish discipline, received at eight years old, from the hand of a woman of thirty, should influence my propensities, my desires, my passions, my very self, for the rest of my life, and that in quite a contrary sense from what might naturally have been expected? The very incident that inflamed my senses gave my desires such an extraordinary turn, that, confined to what I had already experienced, I sought no farther, and, with blood boiling with sensuality almost from my birth, preserved my purity beyond the age when the coldest and tardiest constitutions lose their insensibility. Long tormented, without knowing by what, I gazed on every handsome woman with ardour; imagination incessantly brought their charms to my remembrance, only to transform them into so many demoiselles Lambercier.

Even after I had attained to manhood, this strange fancy, always persistent, and carried to the length of depravity, even of madness, preserved in me a morality which seems its very opposite. If ever education was perfectly chaste, it was certainly that I received; my three aunts were not only of exemplary prudence, but maintained a degree of modest reserve which women have long since thought unnecessary. My father, it is true, loved pleasure; but his gallantry was that of the old

school, and he never expressed his affection for any woman he regarded in terms a virgin could have blushed at; indeed, it was impossible more attention should be paid to that regard we owe the morals of children than was uniformly observed by every one I had any concern with. An equal degree of reserve in this particular was observed at Monsieur Lambercier's, where a good maid-servant was discharged for having once made use of a rather broad expression before us. I had no precise idea before the age of adolescence of the ultimate effect of the passions, but the dim conception I had formed was extremely disgusting; I entertained a particular horror of courtesans, which time has not effaced, nor could I look on a rake without a degree of disdain mingled with terror. My aversion for debauchery dates from a day when I went to the Petit Sacconex along a hollow road, on each side of which were caves, to which, I was told, such folk resorted. What I had seen of dogs always rose up in my mind at the remembrance of this, and filled me with deep disgust.

These prejudices of education, proper in themselves to retard the first explosions of a combustible constitution, were strengthened, as I have already hinted, by the effect the first hints of sensuality produced in me; for, notwithstanding the troublesome ebullition of my blood, I was satisfied with the species of voluptuousness I had already been acquainted with, never turning toward that which had been rendered hateful to me, and yet was so allied to the other without my knowledge. In my foolish fancies, in my erotic imaginings, in the extravagances into which I was often borne, I borrowed, so to speak, the aid of the opposite sex, quite ignorant of the manner in which nature bids us regard it.

Thus I passed the age of puberty, with a constitution extremely ardent, without knowing, or even wishing for, any other gratification of the passions than what Made-

moiselle Lambercier had innocently given me the idea of; and when I became a man, what might have ruined me saved me, for that childish taste, instead of vanishing, only associated with the other. This folly, joined to a natural timidity, has always prevented my being very enterprising with women, so that I have passed my days in languishing in silence for those persons whom I most admired. Never daring openly to confess the bent of my mind in this respect, I yet indulged myself with some correlative actions. To fall at the feet of an imperious mistress, obey her mandates, or implore pardon, were for me exquisite enjoyments; and the more my blood was inflamed by the efforts of a lively imagination, the more I acquired the appearance of a whining lover. It will be readily conceived that this mode of making love is not attended with a rapid progress or imminent danger to the virtue of its object; yet, though I have a few favours to boast of, I have not been excluded from enjoyment, however imaginary. Thus the senses, in concurrence with a mind equally timid and romantic, have preserved my morals chaste, and feelings uncorrupted, with precisely the same inclinations which, seconded with a moderate portion of effrontery, might have plunged me into the most unwarrantable excesses.

I have made the first, most difficult, step in the obscure and painful maze of my Confessions. We never feel so great a degree of repugnance in divulging what is really criminal as what is merely ridiculous. I am now assured of my resolution, for after what I have dared to disclose, nothing can have power to deter me. The difficulty attending these acknowledgments will be readily conceived, when I declare, that during the whole of my life, though frequently labouring under the most violent agitation, being hurried away with the impetuosity of a passion which, when in company with those I loved, deprived me

of the faculty of sight and hearing, my senses distracted, my whole frame convulsed, I could never, in the whole course of the most unbounded familiarity, acquire sufficient resolution to declare my folly, and implore the only favour that remained to bestow. It was bestowed once, however, in childhood, and by a child of my own age, yet it was she who first proposed it.

In thus investigating the first traces of my sensible existence, I find elements which, though seemingly incompatible, have united to produce a simple and uniform effect; while others, apparently the same, have, by the concurrence of certain circumstances, formed such different combinations, that it would never be imagined they had any affinity. Who would believe, for example, that one of the most vigorous springs of my soul was tempered in the identical source from whence luxury and ease mingled with my constitution and circulated in my veins? Before I quit this subject, I will add a striking instance of the different effects they produced.

One day, while I was studying in a chamber contiguous to the kitchen, the maid set some of Mademoiselle Lambercier's combs to dry by the fire, and, on coming to fetch them some time after, was surprised to find the teeth of one of them broken off. Who could be suspected of this mischief? No one but myself had entered the room. I was questioned, but denied having any knowledge of it. Monsieur and Mademoiselle Lambercier consult, exhort, threaten, but all to no purpose; I obstinately persist in the denial; and though this was the first time I had been detected in a confirmed falsehood, appearances were so strong that they overthrew all my protestations. This affair was thought serious; the mischief, the lie, the obstinacy, were considered equally deserving of punishment, which was not now to be administered by Mademoiselle Lambercier. My uncle Bernard was writ-

ten to; he arrived; and my poor cousin being charged with a crime no less serious, we were conducted to the same execution, which was inflicted with great severity. If, finding a remedy in the evil itself, they had sought for ever to allay my depraved desires, they could not have chosen a shorter method to accomplish their design; and, I can assure my readers, I was for a long time freed from the dominion of them.

This severity could not draw from me the expected acknowledgment, which obstinacy brought on several repetitions, and reduced me to a deplorable situation; yet I was immoveable, and resolutely determined to suffer death rather than submit. Force, at length, was obliged to yield to the diabolical infatuation of a child, for no better name was bestowed on my constancy, and I came out of this dreadful trial, torn, it is true, but triumphant.

Nearly fifty years have expired since this adventure — the fear of punishment is no more. Well, then, I aver, in the face of Heaven, I was absolutely innocent; and, so far from breaking, or even touching, the comb, never came near the fire. It may be asked, How did this mischief happen? I can form no conception of it, I only know my own innocence.

Let any one figure to himself a character whose leading traits were docility and timidity, but haughty, ardent, and invincible in its passions; a child, hitherto governed by the voice of reason, treated with mildness, equity, and complaisance, who could not even support the idea of injustice, experiencing, for the first time, so violent an instance of it, inflicted by those he most loved and respected. What perversion of ideas! What confusion in the heart, the brain, in all the little being, intelligent and moral! — let any one, I say, if possible, imagine all this, for I am incapable of giving the least idea of what passed in my mind at that period.

My reason was not sufficiently established to enable me to put myself in the place of others, and judge how much appearances condemned me; I only beheld the rigour of a dreadful chastisement, inflicted for a crime I had not committed; yet I can truly affirm, the smart I suffered, though violent, was inconsiderable compared to what I felt from indignation, rage, and despair. My cousin, who was almost in similar circumstances, having been punished for an involuntary fault, as guilty of a premeditated crime, became furious by my example. Both in the same bed, we embraced each other with convulsive transport; we were almost suffocated; and when our young hearts found sufficient relief to breathe out our indignation, we sat up in the bed, and, with all our force, repeated a hundred times, 'Carnifex! Carnifex! Carnifex!'

Even while I write this I feel my pulse quicken, and should I live a hundred thousand years the agitation of that moment would still be fresh in my memory. The first instance of violence and oppression is so deeply engraven on my soul that every relative idea renews my emotion: the sentiment of indignation, which in its origin had reference only to myself, has acquired such strength, and is at present so completely detached from personal motives, that my heart is as much inflamed at the sight or relation of any act of injustice (whatever may be the object, or wheresoever it may be perpetrated), as if I were the immediate sufferer. When I read the history of a merciless tyrant, or the dark and subtle machination of a knavish designing priest, I could on the instant set off to stab the miscreant, though I were certain to perish in the attempt. I have frequently fatigued myself by running after and stoning a cock, a cow, a dog, or any animal I saw tormenting another, only because it was conscious of possessing superior strength. This may be

natural to me, and I am inclined to believe it is, though the lively impression of the first injustice suffered was too long and too powerfully remembered not to have added considerable force to it.

This occurrence terminated my infantine serenity; from that moment I ceased to enjoy a pure unadulterated happiness, and on a retrospection of the pleasures of my childhood, I yet feel that they ended here. We continued at Bossey some months after this event, but were like our first parents in the Garden of Eden after they had lost their innocence; in appearance our situation was the same, in effect it was totally different. Affection, respect, intimacy, confidence no longer attached the pupils to their guides; we beheld them no longer as divinities, who could read the secrets of our hearts; we were less ashamed of committing faults, more afraid of being accused of them; we learned to dissemble, to rebel, to lie; all the vices common to our years began to corrupt our innocence and embitter our amusements. The country itself, losing those sweet and simple charms which captivate the heart, appeared a gloomy desert, or covered with a veil that concealed its beauties. We cultivated our little gardens no more: our flowers were neglected. We no longer scratched away the mould, and broke out into exclamations of delight on discovering that the grain we had sown was beginning to shoot. We were disgusted with our situation; our preceptors were weary of us. In a word, my uncle wrote for our return, and we left Monsieur and Mademoiselle Lambercier without feeling any regret at the separation.

Nearly thirty years passed away from my leaving Bossey, without once recalling the place to my mind with any degree of satisfaction; but after having passed the prime of life, as I decline into old age, while more recent occurrences are wearing out apace, I feel these remem-

brances revive and imprint themselves on my heart, with a force and charm that every day acquire fresh strength; as if, feeling life fleet from me, I endeavoured to catch it again at its commencement. The most trifling incidents of those happy days delight me, for no other reason than being of those days. I recall every circumstance of time, place, and persons. I see the maid or footman busy in the chamber, a swallow entering the window, a fly settling on my hand while I am repeating my lessons. I see the whole economy of the apartment; on the right hand Monsieur Lambercier's closet, with a print representing all the Popes, a barometer, a large almanac, the windows of the house (which stood in a hollow at the bottom of the garden), shaded by raspberry shrubs, whose shoots sometimes found entrance: I am sensible the reader has no occasion to know all this, but I feel a kind of necessity for relating it. Why am I not permitted to recount all the little anecdotes of that happy age, at the recollection of whose joys I even tremble with delight? Five or six particularly — let us compromise the latter — I will give up five, but then I must have one, and only one, provided I may draw it out to its utmost length, in order to prolong my satisfaction.

If I only sought yours, I should choose that of Mademoiselle Lambercier's posterior, which, by an unlucky fall at the bottom of the meadow, was exposed to the view of the King of Sardinia, who happened to be passing by; but that of the walnut-tree on the terrace is more amusing to me, since here I was an actor, whereas in the above-mentioned scene I was only a spectator; and I must confess I see nothing that should occasion risibility in an accident which, however laughable in itself, alarmed me for a person I loved as a mother, or perhaps as something more.

Ye curious readers, whose expectations are already on

the stretch for the noble history of the walnut-tree on the terrace, listen to the tragedy, and abstain from trembling, if you can, at the horrible catastrophe!

At the outside of the courtyard door, on the left hand, was a terrace; here they often sat after dinner; but it was subject to one inconvenience, being exposed to the rays of the sun; to obviate this defect, Monsieur Lambercier had a walnut-tree set there, the planting of which was attended with great solemnity. The two boarders were godfathers, and while the earth was being filled in round the roots, each held the tree with one hand, singing songs of triumph. In order to water it with more effect, they formed a kind of basin around its foot: myself and cousin, who were every day ardent spectators of this watering, confirmed each other in the very natural idea that it was nobler to plant trees on the terrace than colours on the breach, and this glory we were resolved to procure without sharing it with any one else.

In pursuance of this resolution we cut a slip off a willow, and planted it on the terrace, at eight or ten feet distant from the august walnut-tree. We did not forget to make a hollow round our tree; but the difficulty was how to procure a supply of water, which came from a considerable distance, and which we were not permitted to fetch; but water was absolutely necessary for our willow, and we made use of every stratagem to obtain it. For a few days everything succeeded so well that it began to bud, and throw out small leaves, which we hourly measured, convinced (though now scarce a foot from the ground) that it would soon afford us a refreshing shade.

This unfortunate willow, by engrossing our whole time, rendered us distracted, incapable of application to any other study, and the cause of our inattention not being known, we were kept closer than before. The fatal moment approached when water must fail, and we were already

afflicted with the idea that our tree must perish with drought. At length necessity, the parent of industry, suggested an invention by which we might save our tree from death, and ourselves from despair; it was to make a furrow under ground, which would privately conduct a part of the water from the walnut-tree to our willow. This undertaking was executed with ardour, but did not immediately succeed: our descent was not skillfully planned; the water did not run, the earth falling in and stopping up the furrow, and the mouth being choked with rubbish; yet, though all went contrary, nothing discouraged us: 'Labor omnia vincit improbus.' We made the basin deeper, to give the water a more sensible descent; we cut the bottom of a box into narrow planks; increased the channel from the walnut-tree to our willow, and, laying a row flat at the bottom, set two others inclining towards each other, so as to form a triangular channel; we formed a kind of grating with small sticks at the end next the walnut-tree, to prevent the earth and stones from stopping it up, and having carefully covered our work with well-trodden earth, in a transport of hope and fear attended the hour of watering. After an interval which seemed an age of expectation, this hour arrived. Monsieur Lambercier, as usual, assisted at the operation; we contrived to get between him and our tree, towards which he fortunately turned his back.

They had no sooner emptied the first pail of water than we perceived it running to the willow; this sight was too much for our prudence, and we involuntarily expressed our transport by a shout of joy. The sudden exclamation made Monsieur Lambercier turn about; this was a pity, for at that instant he was delighted to observe how greedily the earth which surrounded the roots of his walnut-tree imbibed the water. Surprised to see two trenches partake of it, he shouted in his turn,

examined, perceived the roguery, and, sending instantly for a pick-axe, at one fatal blow made two or three of our planks fly, crying out meantime with all his strength, 'An aqueduct! an aqueduct!' He redoubled his strokes, every one of which made an impression on our very hearts; in a moment the planks, the channel, the basin, the willow, were all ploughed up; nor was one word pronounced during this terrible transaction, except the above-mentioned exclamation. 'An aqueduct!' he repeated, 'an aqueduct! an aqueduct!'

It may be supposed this adventure had a still more melancholy end for the young architects; this, however, was not the case; the affair ended here. Monsieur Lambercier never reproached us on this account, nor was his countenance clouded with a frown; we even heard him mention the circumstance to his sister with loud bursts of laughter. The laugh of Monsieur Lambercier might be heard to a considerable distance. But what is still more surprising, after the first transport of sorrow had subsided, we did not find ourselves violently afflicted; we planted a tree in another spot, and frequently recollected the catastrophe of the former, repeating with a significant emphasis, 'An aqueduct! an aqueduct!' Till then, at intervals, I had fits of ambition, and could fancy myself Brutus or Aristides, but this was the first visible effect of my vanity. To have constructed an aqueduct with our own hands, to have set a slip of willow in competition with a flourishing tree, appeared to me a supreme degree of glory! I had a juster conception of it at ten than Cæsar entertained at thirty.

The idea of this walnut-tree, with the little anecdotes it gave rise to, have so well continued, or returned to my memory, that the design which conveyed the most pleasing sensations, during my journey to Geneva in the year 1754, was visiting Bossey, and reviewing the monuments

of my infantine amusements, above all the beloved walnut-tree, whose age about that time must have been verging on the third of a century; but I was so beset with company that I could not find a moment to accomplish my design. There is little appearance now of the occasion being renewed; but though I have lost hope, the desire remains, and, should I ever return to that charming spot and find my favourite walnut-tree still existing, I should water it with my tears.

On my return to Geneva I passed two or three years at my uncle's, awaiting the determination of my friends respecting my future establishment. His own son, being destined to engineering, was taught drawing and instructed by his father in the elements of Euclid. I willingly partook of these instructions, but was principally fond of drawing. Meantime they were irresolute whether to make me a watchmaker, a lawyer, or a minister. I should have preferred being a minister, as I thought it must be a fine thing to preach; but the trifling income which had been my mother's, and was to be divided between my brother and myself, was too inconsiderable to defray the expense of my studies. As my age did not render the choice very pressing, I remained with my uncle, passing my time with very little improvement, and paying pretty dear, though not unreasonably, for my board.

My uncle, like my father, was a man of pleasure, but had not learned, like him, to abridge his amusements for the sake of duty; consequently our education was neglected. My aunt was a devotee, who loved singing psalms better than thinking of our improvement, so that we were left entirely to ourselves, which liberty we never abused. Ever inseparable, we were all the world to each other; and, feeling no inclination to frequent the company of disorderly lads of our own age, we learned none

of those habits of libertinism to which our idle life exposed us. Perhaps I am wrong in charging myself and cousin with idleness at the time, for in our lives we were never less so; and, what was extremely fortunate, so incessantly occupied with our amusements that we found no temptation to spend any part of our time in the streets. We made cages, pipes, kites, drums, houses, pop-guns, and crossbows; spoiled the tools of my good old grandfather by endeavouring to make watches in imitation of him; but our favourite amusement was wasting paper in drawing, washing, colouring, and daubing. There came an Italian mountebank to Geneva, called Gamba-Corta, who had an exhibition of puppets, that he made play a kind of comedy. We went once to see them, but cared not to go again, being busily employed in making puppets and inventing comedies of our own, which we immediately set about making them perform, mimicking to the best of our abilities the uncouth voice of Polichinelle; and to complete the business, my good aunt and uncle Bernard had the patience to see and listen to our imitations; but my uncle having one day read an elaborate discourse to his family, we instantly gave up our comedies and began composing sermons. These details, I confess, are not very amusing; but they serve to demonstrate that the former part of our education was well directed, since being, at such an early age, the absolute masters of our time, we found no inclination to abuse it, and so little in want of other companions, that we constantly neglected occasions of seeking them. When taking our walks together, we observed their diversions without feeling any inclination to partake of them. Friendship so entirely occupied our hearts that, pleased with each other's company, the simplest pastimes were sufficient to delight us.

We were soon remarked for being thus inseparable:

and what rendered us more conspicuous, my cousin was very tall, myself extremely short, so that we exhibited a very whimsical contrast. His meagre figure, small sallow countenance, heavy air, and supine gait, excited the ridicule of the children, who, in the dialect of the country, nicknamed him Barnâ Bredanna; and we no sooner got out of doors than our ears were assailed with a repetition of 'Barnâ Bredanna.' He bore this indignity with more patience than I; I was instantly for fighting. This was what the young rogues aimed at. I engaged accordingly and was beaten. My poor cousin did all in his power to assist me, but he was weak, and a single stroke brought him to the ground. I then became furious, and received several smart blows, most of which were aimed at Barnâ Bredanna. This quarrel so far increased the evil that, to avoid their insults, we could only show ourselves in the streets while they were employed at school.

I had already become a redresser of wrongs; I only wanted a lady-love to be a knight-errant in form. I presently had two. I frequently went to see my father at Nyon, a small city in the Vaudois country, where he was now settled. Being universally respected, the affection entertained for him extended to me; and during my visits the question seemed to be who should show me most kindness. A Madame de Vulson, in particular, loaded me with caresses; and to complete all, her daughter made me her gallant. I need not explain what kind of gallant a boy of eleven must be to a girl of two-and-twenty; the artful hussies know how to set little puppets up in front, to conceal more serious engagements. On my part, I saw no discrepancy between myself and Mademoiselle Vulson, was flattered by the circumstance, and gave in to it with my whole heart, or rather my whole head, for this passion certainly reached no further, though it transported me almost to madness, and frequently

produced scenes sufficient to make a spectator expire with laughter.

I have experienced two kinds of love, equally real, which have scarce any affinity, yet each differing materially from tender friendship. My whole life has been divided between these affections, and I have frequently felt the power of both at the same instant. For example, at the very time I so publicly and tyrannically claimed Mademoiselle Vulson that I could not suffer any other of my sex to approach her, I had brief but passionate assignations with a Mademoiselle Goton, who deigned to act the schoolmistress with me. Our meetings, though absolutely childish, afforded me the height of happiness. I felt the whole charm of mystery, and repaid Mademoiselle Vulson in kind, when she least suspected it, the use she made of me in concealing her amours. To my great mortification this secret was discovered, or rather was less well kept by my schoolmistress than by me, and we were soon parted.

Mademoiselle Goton was, in fact, a singular personage. She was not handsome, yet there was a certain something in her face which could not easily be forgotten, and this, for an old fool, I am too often convinced of. Her eyes, in particular, corresponded neither with her age, her height, nor her manner; she had a lofty imposing air, which agreed extremely well with the character she assumed; but the most extraordinary part of her composition was a mixture of forwardness and reserve difficult to be conceived. While she took the greatest liberties with me, she would never permit any to be taken with her in return, treating me precisely like a child. This makes me suppose that she had either ceased herself to be a child or was yet sufficiently so to regard as mere play the danger to which this folly exposed her.

I was so absolutely in the power of both of these mis-

tresses that when in the presence of either I never thought of her who was absent; in other respects the effects they produced in me bore no affinity. I could have passed my whole life with Mademoiselle Vulson, without forming a wish to quit her: but then my satisfaction was attended only with a pleasing serenity. In numerous companies I was more particularly charmed with her. The sprightly sallies of her wit, the arch glance of her eye, even jealousy itself, strengthened my attachment, and I triumphed in the preference she seemed to bestow on me, while addressed by more powerful rivals. It was a torment, but yet a pleasing one. Applause, encouragement, and smiles gave animation to my happiness. Surrounded by a throng of observers, I felt the whole force of love—I was passionate, transported; in a *tête-à-tête* I should have been constrained, thoughtful, perhaps unhappy. If Mademoiselle Vulson was ill, I suffered with her; would willingly have given up my own health to establish hers (and, observe, I knew the want of it from experience); absent, she employed my thoughts, I felt the want of her; present, her caresses came with warmth and rapture to my heart, though my senses were unaffected. The slight familiarities she bestowed on me I could not have supported the idea of her granting to another; I loved her with a brother's affection, but experienced all the jealousy of a lover.

With Mademoiselle Goton this passion might have acquired a degree of fury; I should have been a Turk, a tiger, had I once imagined that she treated any other as she did me; it was a favour which I had to beg for upon my knees. The pleasure I felt on approaching Mademoiselle Vulson was sufficiently ardent, though unattended with uneasy sensations; but at sight of Mademoiselle Goton I felt myself bewildered — every sense was absorbed in ecstasy. I believe it would have been

impossible to remain long with her; I must have been suffocated with the violence of my palpitations. I equally dreaded giving either of them displeasure: with one I was complaisant; with the other submissive. I would not have offended Mademoiselle Vulson for the world; but if Mademoiselle Goton had commanded me to throw myself into the flames I think I should instantly have obeyed her.

Happily, both for the latter and myself, our amours, or rather rendezvous, were not of long duration; and, though my connection with Mademoiselle Vulson was less dangerous, after a continuance of some greater length, that likewise had its catastrophe; indeed, the termination of a love-affair is good for nothing unless it partakes of the romantic and can furnish out at least an exclamation. Though my correspondence with Mademoiselle Vulson was less animated, it was perhaps more endearing; we never separated without tears, and it can hardly be conceived what a void I felt in my heart. I could neither think nor speak of anything but her. These romantic sorrows were not affected, though I am inclined to believe they did not absolutely centre in her, for I am persuaded (though I did not perceive it at that time) that being deprived of amusement bore a considerable share in them. To soften the rigour of absence, we agreed to correspond with each other, and the pathetic expressions our letters contained were sufficient to have split a rock. In a word, I had the honour of her not being able to endure the pain of separation; she came to see me at Geneva. My head was now completely turned; and during the two days she remained there I was intoxicated with delight. At her departure I would have thrown myself into the water after her, and I absolutely rent the air with my cries. The week following she sent me sweetmeats and gloves. This certainly would have appeared ex-

tremely gallant, had I not been informed of her marriage at the same instant, and that the journey I had thought proper to give myself the honour of was only to buy her wedding garments. My indignation may easily be conceived; I shall not attempt to describe it. In this heroic fury, I swore never more to see the perfidious girl, supposing that to be the greatest punishment that could be inflicted on her. This, however, did not occasion her death; for twenty years after, while on a visit to my father, being with him on the lake, I asked who those ladies were in a boat not far from ours. 'What!' said my father, smiling, 'does not your heart inform you? It is your former love, it is Madame Cristin — Mademoiselle Vulson.' I started at the almost forgotten name, and instantly ordered the watermen to turn off, not judging it worth while to be perjured, however favourable the opportunity for revenge, in renewing a dispute of twenty years past with a woman of forty.

[1723–1728.] Thus, before my future destination was determined, did I fool away the most precious moments of my youth. After deliberating a long time on the bent of my natural inclinations, they resolved to dispose of me in a manner the most repugnant to them. I was sent to Monsieur Masseron, the city registrar, to learn (according to the expression of my uncle Bernard) the thriving occupation of a *grapignan*. This appellation was inconceivably displeasing to me, and I promised myself but little satisfaction in the prospect of heaping up money by a mean employment. The assiduity and subjection required completed my disgust, and I never set foot in the office without feeling a kind of horror, which every day gained fresh strength. Monsieur Masseron, who was not better pleased with my abilities than I was with the employment, treated me with disdain, inces-

santly upbraiding me with being a fool and blockhead, not forgetting to repeat that my uncle had assured him I had 'knowledge, knowledge,' though he could not find that I knew anything; that he had promised to furnish him with a sprightly boy, but had, in truth, sent him an ass. To conclude, I was ignominiously turned out of the registry, as being a stupid fellow, being pronounced a fool by all Monsieur Masseron's clerks, and fit only to handle a file.

My vocation thus determined, I was bound apprentice; not, however, to a watchmaker, but to an engraver; and I had been so completely humiliated by the contempt of the registrar that I submitted without a murmur. My master, whose name was Monsieur Ducommon, was a young man of a very violent and boorish character, who contrived in a short time to tarnish all the amiable qualities of my childhood, to stupefy a disposition naturally sprightly, and reduce my feelings, as well as my condition, to an absolute state of servitude. I forgot my Latin, history, and antiquities; I could hardly recollect whether such people as Romans ever existed. When I visited my father, he no longer beheld his idol, nor could the ladies recognise the gallant Jean-Jacques; nay, I was so well convinced that Monsieur and Mademoiselle Lambercier would scarce receive me as their pupil that I endeavoured to avoid their company, and have never seen them since. The vilest inclinations, the basest actions, succeeded my amiable amusements, and even obliterated the very remembrance of them. I must have had, in spite of my good education, a great propensity to degenerate, else the declension could not have followed with such ease and rapidity, for never did so promising a Cæsar so quickly become a Laridon.[1]

The trade itself did not displease me. I had a lively

[1] An allusion to La Fontaine's fable, 'Education.'

taste for drawing. There was nothing displeasing in the exercise of the graver; and as it required no extraordinary abilities to attain perfection as a watch-case engraver, I hoped to arrive at it. Perhaps I should have accomplished my design, if unreasonable restraint, added to the brutality of my master, had not rendered my business disgusting. I wasted his time, and employed myself in engraving medals which served me and my companions as a kind of insignia for a new-invented order of chivalry, and though this differed very little from my usual employ, I considered it as a relaxation. Unfortunately, my master caught me at this contraband labour, and a severe beating was the consequence. He reproached me at the same time with attempting to make counterfeit money, because our medals bore the arms of the Republic, though I can truly aver I had no conception of false money, and very little of the true, knowing better how to make a Roman 'as' than one of our three-sous pieces.

My master's tyranny rendered insupportable that labour I should otherwise have loved, and drove me to vices I naturally despised, such as falsehood, idleness, and theft. Nothing ever gave me a clearer demonstration of the difference between filial dependence and abject slavery than the remembrance of the change produced in me at that period. Naturally shy and timid, effrontery was far from my nature; but hitherto I had enjoyed a reasonable liberty; this I suddenly lost. I was enterprising at my father's, free at Monsieur Lambercier's, discreet at my uncle's; but, with my master, I became fearful, and from that moment my mind was vitiated. Accustomed to live with my superiors on terms of perfect equality, to be witness of no pleasures I could not command, to see no dish I was not to partake of, or be sensible of a desire I might not express; to be able to bring every wish of my heart to my lips — judge

what must become of me in a house where I was scarce allowed to speak, was forced to quit the table before the meal was half ended, and the room when I had nothing particular to do there; was incessantly confined to my work; pleasures for others, privations only for me; while the liberty that my master and his journeymen enjoyed served only to increase the weight of my subjection. When disputes happened to arise, though conscious that I understood the subject better than any of them, I dared not offer my opinion; in a word, everything I saw became an object of desire, only because I was not permitted to enjoy anything. Farewell gaiety, ease, and those happy turns of expression which formerly even made my faults escape correction! I recollect a circumstance that happened at my father's, which even now makes me smile. Being for some fault ordered to bed without my supper, as I was passing through the kitchen, with my poor morsel of bread in my hand, I saw the meat turning on the spit; my father and the rest were round the fire; I must bow to every one as I passed. When I had gone through this ceremony, leering with a wishful eye at the roast meat, which looked so inviting and smelt so savoury, I could not abstain from making that a bow likewise, adding in a pitiful tone, 'Good-bye, roast meat!' This unpremeditated pleasantry put them in such good humour that I was permitted to stay and partake of it. Perhaps the same thing might have produced a similar effect at my master's, but such a thought could never have occurred to me, or, if it had, I should not have had courage to express it.

Thus I learned to covet, dissemble, lie, and at length to steal — a propensity I never felt the least idea of before, though since that time I have never been able entirely to divest myself of it. Desire and inability

united naturally lead to this vice, which is the reason pilfering is so common among footmen and apprentices, though the latter, as they grow up, and find themselves in a situation where everything is at their command, lose this shameful propensity. As I never experienced this advantage, I never enjoyed the benefit.

Good sentiments, ill directed, frequently lead children into vice. Notwithstanding my continual wants and temptations, it was more than a year before I could resolve to take even eatables. My first theft was occasioned by complaisance, but it was productive of others which had not so plausible an excuse.

My master had a journeyman named Verrat, whose residence in the neighbourhood had a garden at a considerable distance from the house, which produced excellent asparagus. This Verrat, who had no great plenty of money, took it in his head to rob his mother of the most early production of her garden, and by the sale of it procure those indulgences he could not otherwise afford himself; but, not being very nimble, he did not care to run the hazard of a surprise. After some preliminary flattery, of which I did not comprehend the meaning, he proposed this expedition to me, as an idea which had that moment struck him. At first I would not listen to the proposal; but he persisted in his solicitations, and, as I could never resist the attacks of flattery, at length prevailed. Accordingly, I every morning repaired to the garden, gathered the best of the asparagus, and took it to the Molard, where some good old women, who guessed how I came by it, wishing to diminish the price, made no secret of their suspicions. This produced the desired effect, for, being alarmed, I took whatever they offered, which, being taken to Monsieur Verrat, was presently metamorphosed into a breakfast, and shared with a companion of his; for, though I had procured it, I never

partook of their good cheer, being fully satisfied with an inconsiderable bribe.

I executed my roguery with the greatest fidelity, seeking only to please my employer; and several days passed before it came into my head to rob the robber, and tithe Monsieur Verrat's harvest. I never considered the hazard I ran in these expeditions, not only of a torrent of abuse, but — what I should have been still more sensible of — a hearty beating; for the miscreant who received the whole benefit would certainly have denied all knowledge of the fact, and I should only have received a double portion of punishment for daring to accuse him, since, being only an apprentice, I stood no chance of being believed in opposition to a journeyman. Thus, in every situation powerful rogues know how to save themselves at the expense of the feeble.

This practice taught me it was not so terrible to thieve as I had imagined. I took care to make this discovery turn to some account, helping myself to everything within my reach that I conceived an inclination for. I was not absolutely ill-fed at my master's, and temperance was only painful to me by comparing it with the luxury he enjoyed. The custom of sending young people from table precisely when those things are served up which seem most tempting seems well calculated to make them greedy as well as roguish. Ere long I became both, and generally came off very well — very ill when I was caught.

I recollect an attempt to procure some apples, which was attended with circumstances that make me smile and shudder even at this instant. The fruit was standing in a pantry, which, by a lattice at a considerable height, received light from the kitchen. One day, being alone in the house, I climbed upon the bread-chest to see these precious apples, which, being out of my reach, made this pantry appear the Garden of the Hesperides.

I fetched the spit — tried if it would reach them — it was too short — I lengthened it with a small one which was used for game, my master being very fond of hunting — darted at them several times without success, but at length was transported to find that I was bringing up an apple. I drew it gently to the lattice — was going to seize it, when (who can express my grief and astonishment?) I found it would not pass through — it was too large. I tried every expedient to accomplish my design, sought supporters to keep the spits in the same position, a knife to divide the apple, and a lath to hold it with; at length I so far succeeded as to effect the division, and made no doubt of drawing the pieces through; but it was scarcely separated — compassionate reader, sympathise with my affliction — when both pieces fell into the pantry.

Though I lost time by this experiment, I did not lose courage; but, dreading a surprise, I put off the attempt till next day, when I hoped to be more successful, and returned to my work as if nothing had happened, without once thinking of what the two indiscreet witnesses I had left in the pantry deposed against me.

The next day, a fine opportunity offering, I renew the trial. I fasten the spits together; mount up; take aim; am just going to dart at my prey — unfortunately the dragon did not sleep. The pantry door opens, my master makes his appearance, and looking up, exclaims, 'Bravo!' The pen drops from my hand.

A continual repetition of ill treatment rendered me callous; it seemed a kind of composition for my crimes, which authorised me to continue them, and, instead of looking back at the punishment, I looked forward to revenge. Being beaten like a slave, I judged I had a right to all the vices of one. I was convinced that to rob and be punished were inseparable, and constituted, if I may so express myself, a kind of traffic, in which, if I performed

my part of the bargain, my master would take care not to be deficient in his. That preliminary settled, I applied myself to thieving with great tranquillity, and whenever this interrogatory occurred to my mind, 'What will be the consequence?' the reply was ready, 'I know the worst, I shall be beaten; no matter, I was made for it.'

I love good eating; am sensuous, but not greedy; I have such a variety of inclinations to gratify, that this can never predominate; and, unless my heart be unoccupied, which very rarely happens, I pay but little attention to my appetite. For this reason I did not long confine myself to purloining eatables, but extended this propensity to everything I wished to possess, and, if I did not become a robber in form, it was only because money never tempted me greatly. My master had a closet in the workshop, which he kept locked; this I contrived to open and shut as often as I pleased, and laid his best tools, fine drawings, impressions, in a word, everything he wished to keep from me, under contribution. These thefts were so far innocent that they were always employed in his service; but I was transported at having the trifles in my possession, and imagined I stole the art with its productions. Besides what I have mentioned, his boxes contained threads of gold and silver, small jewels, valuable coins, and other money; yet, though I seldom had five sous in my pocket, I do not recollect ever having cast a wishful look at them; on the contrary, I beheld these valuables rather with terror than delight. I am convinced that this dread of taking money was, in a great measure, the effect of education. There was mingled with the idea of it the fear of infamy, a prison, punishment, and the gallows. Had I even felt the temptation, these objects would have made me tremble; whereas my failings appeared a species of waggery, and in truth they were little else; they could but

occasion a good trimming, and this I was already prepared for.

But, again I say, I had no covetous longings to repress. A sheet of fine drawing-paper was a greater temptation than money sufficient to have purchased a ream. This unreasonable caprice is connected with one of the singularities of my character, and has so far influenced my conduct that it requires a particular explanation.

My passions are extremely violent; while under their influence nothing can equal my impetuosity; I am an absolute stranger to discretion, respect, fear, or decorum; rude, saucy, violent, and intrepid, no shame can stop, no danger intimidate me. Beyond the object in view the whole world is not worth a thought; this is the enthusiasm of a moment; the next, perhaps, I am plunged in a state of annihilation. Take me in my moments of tranquillity, I am indolence and timidity itself; a word to speak, the least trifle to perform, appear an intolerable labour; everything alarms and terrifies me; the very buzzing of a fly will make me shudder; I am so subdued by fear and shame that I would gladly shield myself from mortal view. When obliged to exert myself, I am ignorant what to do; when forced to speak, I am at a loss for words; and if any one looks at me I am instantly out of countenance. If animated with my subject, I express my thoughts with ease, but in ordinary conversations I can say nothing — absolutely nothing; and the obligation to speak renders them insupportable.

I may add that none of my predominant inclinations centre in those pleasures which are to be purchased: money empoisons my delights; I must have them unadulterated. I love those of the table, for instance, but cannot endure the restraints of good company or the intemperance of taverns; I can enjoy them only with a friend, for alone it is equally impossible; my imagination is then so

occupied with other things that I find no pleasure in eating. If the warmth of my blood calls for the society of the fair sex, my heart calls still more earnestly for pure love. Women who are to be purchased have no charms for me. It is the same with all other enjoyments: if not truly disinterested, they are insipid; in a word, I am fond of those things which are only estimable to minds formed for the peculiar enjoyment of them.

I never thought money so desirable as it is usually imagined. If you would enjoy, you must transform it; and this transformation is frequently attended with inconvenience: you must bargain, purchase, pay dear, be badly served, and often duped. If I want anything, I wish to have it good of its kind; for money I am given what is bad. I ask for an egg, am assured it is new-laid — I find it stale; fruit in perfection — 'tis absolutely green; a damsel — she has some defect. I love good wine, but where shall I get it? Not at my wine-merchant's — he will poison me of a certainty. I wish to be well treated; how shall I compass my design? I would make friends, send messages, write letters, come, go, wait, and in the end must be frequently deceived. Money is the perpetual source of uneasiness; I fear it more than I love good wine.

A thousand times, both during and since my apprenticeship, have I gone out to purchase some delicacy. I approach the pastry-cook's, perceive some women at the counter, and imagine they are laughing at the little epicure. I pass a fruit-shop, see some fine pears, their appearance tempts me; but then two or three young people are near, a man I am acquainted with is standing at the door, a girl is approaching — perhaps our own servant; I take all that pass for persons I have some knowledge of, and my near sight contributes to deceive me: I am everywhere intimidated, restrained by some ob-

stacle, my desire grows with my hesitancy; and at length, with money in my pocket, I return as I went, for want of resolution to purchase what I long for.

I should enter into the most insipid details were I to relate the trouble, shame, repugnance, and inconvenience of all kinds which I have experienced in parting with my money, whether in my own person, or by the agency of others; as I proceed the reader will get acquainted with my disposition, and perceive all this without my troubling him with the recital.

This once comprehended, one of my seeming contradictions will be easily accounted for, and the most sordid avarice reconciled with the greatest contempt of money. It is a moveable which I consider of so little value, that, when destitute of it, I never wish to acquire any; and when I have a sum I keep it by me, for want of knowing how to dispose of it to my satisfaction; but let an agreeable and convenient opportunity present itself, and I empty my purse in a moment. Not that I would have the reader imagine I am extravagant from a motive of ostentation — the characteristic of misers, — quite the reverse; it was ever in subservience to my pleasures, and, instead of glorying in expense, I endeavour to conceal it. I so well perceive that money is not made to answer my purposes, that I am almost ashamed to have any, and, still more, to make use of it. Had I ever possessed a moderate independence, I am convinced I should have had no propensity to become avaricious. I should have required no more, and cheerfully lived up to my income; but my precarious situation keeps me in fear. I love liberty, and I loathe constraint, dependence, subjection. As long as my purse contains money it secures my independence, and exempts me from the trouble of seeking other money, a trouble of which I have always had a perfect horror; and the dread of seeing the end of my

independence makes me unwilling to part with my means. The money that we possess is the instrument of liberty, that which we lack and strive to obtain is the instrument of slavery. Thence it is that I hold fast to aught that I have, and yet covet nothing more.

My disinterestedness, then, is only idleness; the pleasure of possessing is not in my estimation worth the trouble of acquiring; my dissipation is only another form of idleness; when we have an opportunity of disbursing pleasantly we should make the best possible use of it. I am less tempted by money than by other objects, because between the moment of possessing the money and that of using it to obtain the desired object there is always an interval, however short; whereas to possess the thing is to enjoy it. I see a thing, and it tempts me; but if I see only the means of acquiring it, I am not tempted. Therefore it is that I have been a pilferer, and am so even now, in the way of mere trifles to which I take a fancy, and which I find it easier to take than to ask for; but I never in my life recollect having taken a liard from any one, except about fifteen years ago, when I stole seven livres and ten sous. The story is worth recounting, as it exhibits a marvellous concurrence of effrontery and stupidity that I should scarcely credit, did it relate to any but myself.

It was in Paris; I was walking with Monsieur de Francueil at the Palais-Royal, at five o'clock in the afternoon; he pulled out his watch, looked at it, and said to me, 'Suppose we go to the Opera?' 'With all my heart.' We go; he takes two tickets, gives me one, and enters before me with the other; I follow, find the door crowded, and, looking in, see every one standing; judging, therefore, that Monsieur de Francueil might suppose me concealed by the company, I go out, ask for my counterfoil, and, getting the money returned, leave the house,

without considering that by the time I had reached the outer door every one would be seated, and Monsieur de Francueil might readily perceive I was not there.

As nothing could be more opposite to my natural inclination than this proceeding, I note it to show that there are moments of delirium when men ought not to be judged by their actions: this was not stealing the money, it was stealing the use for which it was destined: the less it was a robbery, the more was it an infamy.

I should never end these details were I to describe all the gradations through which I passed, during my apprenticeship, from the sublimity of a hero to the baseness of a knave. Though I entered into most of the vices of my situation, I had no relish for its pleasures: the amusements of my companions were displeasing, and when too much restraint had made my business wearisome, I had nothing to amuse me. This renewed my taste for reading, which had long been neglected. I thus committed a fresh offence: books made me neglect my work, and brought on additional punishment, while inclination, strengthened by constraint, became an unconquerable passion. La Tribu, a woman who owned a well-known lending library, furnished me with all kinds: good or bad, I perused them with avidity, and without discrimination. I read in the workshop; I read while going on errands; I read in odd corners, sometimes for hours together; my head was turned with reading, it absorbed me wholly. My master watched me, surprised me, chastised me, took away my books. How many of these were torn, burnt, flung out of the window! How many of La Tribu's volumes lost their fellows! When I had not wherewith to pay her, I brought her my linen, my suits of clothes; the three sous that I received every Sunday were duly handed to her.

It will be said, 'At length, then, money became neces-

sary.' True; but this happened at a time when reading had deprived me both of resolution and activity: totally occupied by this new inclination, I only wished to read, I robbed no longer. This is another of my peculiarities; a mere nothing frequently calls me off from what I appear most attached to; I give in to the new idea; it becomes a passion, and immediately every former desire is forgotten. My heart beat with impatience to run over the new book I carried in my pocket; the first moment I was alone, I seized the opportunity to draw it out, and thought no longer of rummaging my master's closet. I cannot believe that I would have pilfered, even had my expenses been more costly. La Tribu gave me credit, and, when once I had the book in my possession, I thought no more of the trifle I was to pay for it. As money came it naturally passed to this woman; and when she chanced to be pressing, nothing was so conveniently at hand as my own effects; to steal in advance required foresight, and robbing to pay was no temptation.

The frequent reproaches and blows I received, together with my private and ill-chosen studies, rendered me reserved, unsociable, and almost deranged my reason. Though my taste had not preserved me from silly, unmeaning books, by good fortune I was a stranger to licentious or obscene ones: not that La Tribu (who was very accommodating) made any scruple of lending these; on the contrary, to enhance their worth, she spoke of them with an air of mystery which produced an effect she had not foreseen, for both shame and disgust made me constantly refuse them. Chance so well seconded my bashful disposition, that I was past the age of thirty before I saw any of those dangerous compositions, to which a fine lady of fashion has no other objection than that they must be read with one hand.

In less than a year I had exhausted La Tribu's scanty

library, and was unhappy for want of further amusement. My reading, though frequently ill-chosen, had worn off my childish follies, and brought back my heart to nobler sentiments than my condition had inspired; meantime, disgusted with all within my reach, and hopeless of attaining aught else, my present situation appeared miserable. My passions began to acquire strength, I felt their influence, without knowing to what object they would conduct me. I was as far from guessing the truth as if I had been sexless, and, though past the age of boyhood, could not see beyond. At this time my imagination took a turn which helped to calm my increasing emotions, and, indeed, saved me from myself; it was, to contemplate those situations, in the books I had read, which produced the most striking effect on my mind — to recall, combine, and apply them to myself in such a manner as to become one of the personages my recollection presented, and be continually in those fancied circumstances which were most agreeable to my inclinations; in a word, by contriving to place myself in these fictitious situations, the idea of my real one was in a great measure obliterated. This fondness for imaginary objects, and the facility with which I could gain possession of them, completed my disgust for everything around me, and fixed that inclination for solitude which has ever since been predominant. We shall have more than once occasion to remark the odd effects of a disposition misanthropic and melancholy in appearance, but which proceed, in fact, from a heart too affectionate, too ardent, which, for want of society with similar dispositions, is constrained to content itself with fictions. It is sufficient, at present, to have traced the origin of a propensity which has modified my passions, and, restraining them within bounds, has rendered me idle in action, though too ardent in desire.

Thus I attained my sixteenth year, uneasy, discontented with myself and everything that surrounded me; displeased with my occupation, without enjoying the pleasures common to my age, weeping without cause, sighing I knew not why, and cherishing my chimerical ideas for want of realities. Every Sunday, after sermon-time, my companions came to fetch me out, wishing me to partake of their diversions. I would willingly have been excused, but when once engaged in amusements, I was more animated and enterprising than any of them; it was equally difficult to engage or restrain me: indeed, this was a leading trait in my character. In our country walks I was ever foremost, and never thought of returning till reminded by some of my companions. I twice suffered for this, the city gates having been shut before I could reach them. The reader may imagine what treatment this procured me the following mornings; and I was promised such a reception for the third that I made a firm resolution never to expose myself to the danger of it. Notwithstanding, this dreaded third occasion came, my vigilance having been rendered useless by a cursed captain, named Monsieur Minutoli, who, when on guard, always shut the gate he had charge of half an hour before the usual time. I was returning home with my two companions, and had got within half a league of the city, when I heard them beat the retreat; I redouble my pace, I run with my utmost speed, I approach the bridge breathless and faint, see the soldiers already at their posts, and call out to them in a suffocated voice. It is too late; I am twenty paces from the guard; the first bridge is already drawn up, and I tremble to see those terrible horns advanced in the air which announce the fatal and inevitable destiny which from this moment shall follow me.

I threw myself on the glacis in a transport of despair,

and literally bit the dust, while my companions, who only laughed at the accident, immediately determined what to do. My resolution, though different from theirs, was equally sudden: on the spot, I swore never to return to my master's, and the next morning, when my companions re-entered the city, I bade them an eternal adieu, conjuring them at the same time to inform my cousin Bernard of my resolve, and the place where he might see me for the last time.

From the commencement of my apprenticeship I had seldom seen him; at first, indeed, we saw each other on Sundays, but each acquiring different habits, our meetings were less frequent. I am persuaded his mother contributed greatly towards this change. He was to consider himself as belonging to the well-bred suburban class; I was a pitiful apprentice of Saint-Gervais. Notwithstanding our relationship, equality no longer subsisted between us, and it was degrading himself to frequent my company. As he had naturally a good heart, his mother's lessons did not take an immediate effect, and for some time he continued to visit me. Having learned of my resolution, he hastened to the spot I had appointed, not, however, to dissuade me from it or to join me, but to render my flight agreeable by some trifling presents, as my own resources would not have carried me far. He gave me, among other things, a small sword, which I was very proud of, and took with me as far as Turin, where absolute want constrained me to dispose of it, and I passed it, as they say, through my body. The more I reflect on his behaviour at this critical moment, the more I am persuaded he followed the instructions of his mother, and perhaps his father likewise; for had he been left to his own feelings he would have endeavoured to retain, or have been tempted to accompany me; on the contrary, he encouraged the design,

and when he saw me resolutely determined to pursue it, without seeming much affected, left me to my fate. We never wrote to each other from that time. I cannot but regret this loss, for his heart was essentially good, and we seemed formed for a more lasting friendship.

Before I abandon myself to the fatality of my destiny, let me contemplate for a moment the prospect that awaited me had I fallen into the hands of a better master. Nothing could have been more agreeable to my disposition, or more likely to confer happiness, than the peaceful and obscure condition of a good artificer, in so respectable a class as engravers are considered at Geneva. I could have obtained an easy subsistence, though not a fortune; this would have bounded my ambition; I should have had means to indulge in moderate pleasures, and should have continued in my natural sphere, without meeting with any temptation to go beyond it. Having an imagination sufficiently fertile to embellish with its chimeras every situation, and powerful enough to transport me from one to another, it was immaterial in which I was fixed. However far it might be from the spot where I happened to be, I could establish myself at will in the finest castle in Spain. That condition was best adapted to me which, requiring the least care or exertion, left the mind most at liberty; and this happiness I should have enjoyed. In my native country, in the bosom of my religion, family, and friends, I should have passed a calm and peaceful life, in the uniformity of a pleasing occupation, and among connections dear to my heart. I should have been a good Christian, a good citizen, a good friend, a good workman, a good man. I should have relished my condition, perhaps have been an honour to it; and after having passed a life of happy obscurity, surrounded by my family, I should have died at peace.

Soon forgotten, doubtless, at least I should have been regretted whenever I was remembered.

Instead of this — what a picture am I about to draw! Alas! why should I anticipate the miseries I have endured? The reader will have but too much of the melancholy subject.

BOOK II

[1728–1731]

THE moment in which fear had instigated my flight did not seem more terrible than that wherein I put my design in execution appeared delightful. To leave my relations, my resources, while yet a child, in the midst of my apprenticeship, before I had learned enough of my business to earn a subsistence; to run on inevitable misery and danger; to expose myself in that age of weakness and innocence to all the temptations of vice and despair; to set out in search of errors, misfortunes, snares, slavery, and death, under a more inflexible yoke than that which I had been unable to endure: this I was about to do — this was the picture I should have drawn. How different was the idea I entertained of it! The independence I seemed to possess was the sole object of my contemplation; having obtained my liberty, I thought everything attainable. I entered with confidence on the vast theatre of the world, which my merit was to captivate. At every step I expected to find amusements, treasures, and adventures; friends ready to serve, and mistresses eager to please me. I had but to show myself, and the whole universe would be interested in my concerns; not but I could have been content with something less; a charming society, with sufficient means, might have satisfied me. My moderation was such that the sphere in which I proposed to shine was rather circumscribed, but then it was to possess the very quintessence of enjoyment, and myself the principal object. A single

castle, for instance, might have bounded my ambition. Could I have been the favourite of the lord and lady, the daughter's lover, the son's friend, and protector of the neighbours, I might have been content, and sought no further.

In expectation of this modest fortune, I passed a few days in the environs of the city, with some country people of my acquaintance, who received me with more kindness than I should have met with in town; they welcomed, lodged, and fed me cheerfully. I could not be said to live on charity; these favours were not conferred with a sufficient appearance of superiority.

I rambled about in this manner till I got to Confignon, in Savoy, at about two leagues' distance from Geneva. The vicar was called Monsieur de Pontverre: this name, so famous in the history of the republic, caught my attention. I was curious to see what appearance the descendants of the 'gentleman of the spoon' exhibited. I went, therefore, to visit this Monsieur de Pontverre, and was received with great civility. He spoke of the heresy of Geneva, declaimed on the authority of Holy Mother Church, and then invited me to dinner. I had little to object to arguments which had so desirable a conclusion, and was inclined to believe that priests, who gave such excellent dinners, might be as good as our ministers. Notwithstanding Monsieur de Pontverre's pedigree, I certainly possessed more learning; but I rather sought to be a good companion than an expert theologian; and his Frangi wine, which I thought delicious, argued so powerfully on his side, that I should have blushed at silencing so kind a host. I therefore yielded him the victory, or rather declined the contest. Any one who had observed my precaution would certainly have pronounced me a dissembler, though in fact I was only courteous. Flattery, or rather condescension, is not al-

ways a vice in young people; it is more often a virtue. When treated with kindness, it is natural to feel an attachment for the person who confers the obligation; we do not acquiesce because we wish to deceive, but from dread of giving uneasiness, or because we wish to avoid the ingratitude of rendering evil for good. What interest had Monsieur de Pontverre in entertaining me, treating me well, and endeavouring to convince me? None but mine; my young heart told me this, and I was penetrated with gratitude and respect for the generous priest. I was sensible of my superiority, but scorned to repay his hospitality by taking advantage of it. I had no conception of hypocrisy in this forbearance, or thought of changing my religion; nay, so far was the idea from being familiar to me, that I looked on it with a degree of horror which seemed to exclude the possibility of such an event. I only wished to avoid giving offence to those who, I was sensible, caressed me from that motive. I wished to cultivate their good opinion, and meantime leave them the hope of success by seeming less on my guard than I really was. My conduct in this particular resembled the coquetry of some very honest women, who, to obtain their wishes without permitting or promising anything, sometimes encourage hopes they never mean to realise.

Reason, pity, and love of order certainly demanded that instead of being encouraged in my folly, I should have been dissuaded from the ruin I was courting, and sent back to my family; and this conduct any one that was actuated by genuine virtue would have pursued; but it should be observed that, though Monsieur de Pontverre was a religious man, he was not a virtuous one, but a bigot, who knew no virtue except worshipping images and telling his beads; in a word, a kind of missionary, who thought the height of merit consisted in writing libels against the ministers of Geneva. Far from wishing to

send me back, he endeavoured to favour my escape, and put it out of my power to return even had I been so disposed. It was a thousand to one, but he was sending me to perish with hunger, or become a villain; but all this was foreign to his purpose; he saw a soul snatched from heresy, and restored to the bosom of the Church; whether I was an honest man or a knave was immaterial, provided I went to mass. This ridiculous mode of thinking is not peculiar to Catholics; it is that of every dogmatical persuasion where merit consists in belief, and not in deeds.

'You are called by the Almighty,' said Monsieur de Pontverre; 'go to Annecy, where you will find a good and charitable lady, whom the bounty of the King enables to turn souls from those errors she has happily renounced.' He spoke of a Madame de Warens, a new convert, to whom the priests contrived to send those wretches who were disposed to sell their faith, and with these she was in a manner constrained to share a pension of two thousand francs bestowed on her by the King of Sardinia. I felt myself extremely humiliated at being supposed to want the assistance of a good and charitable lady. I had no objection to be accommodated with everything I stood in need of, but did not wish to receive it on the footing of charity, and to owe this obligation to a devotee was still worse; however, notwithstanding my scruples, the persuasions of Monsieur de Pontverre, the dread of perishing with hunger, the pleasures I promised myself from the journey, and hope of obtaining some desirable situation, determined me; and I set out, though reluctantly, for Annecy. I could easily have reached it in a day, but, being in no great haste to arrive there, it took me three. My head was filled with the idea of adventures, and I approached every country-seat I saw in my way in expectation of having them realised. I had too much timidity to knock at the doors, or even enter if I saw them open,

but I did what I dared — which was to sing under those windows that I thought had the most favourable appearance; and was very much disconcerted to find I wasted my breath to no purpose, and that neither young nor old ladies were attracted by the melody of my voice or the wit of my poetry, though some songs my companions had taught me I thought excellent, and that I sang them incomparably.

At length I arrived at Annecy, and saw Madame de Warens. As this period of my life determined my character, I cannot resolve to pass it lightly over. I was in the middle of my sixteenth year, and, though I could not be called handsome, was well made for my height. I had a good foot, a well-turned leg, a frank and animated countenance, a neatly-formed mouth, black hair and eyebrows, and my eyes, though small and rather too sunken, darted that innate fire which inflamed my blood. Unfortunately for me, I knew nothing of all this, never in my life having bestowed a single thought on my person till it was too late to be of any service to me. The timidity common to my age was heightened by a natural benevolence, which made me dread the idea of giving pain. Though my mind had received some cultivation, having seen nothing of the world, I was an absolute stranger to polite address, and my mental acquisitions, so far from supplying this defect, only served to increase my embarrassment by making me sensible of every deficiency.

Fearing then that my appearance might prejudice me, I had recourse to other expedients; I wrote a most elaborate letter, wherein, mingling the rhetoric which I had borrowed from books with the phrases of an apprentice, I endeavoured to strike the attention and insure the goodwill of Madame de Warens. I enclosed Monsieur de Pontverre's letter in my own, and set out to face this terrible audience. Madame de Warens was not at home;

they told me she had gone to church. It was Palm Sunday, in the year 1728. I hasten after her — overtake — speak to her. The place is yet fresh in my memory — how can it be otherwise? Often have I moistened it with my tears and covered it with kisses. Why cannot I enclose with a balustrade of gold the happy spot, and render it the object of universal veneration? Whoever wishes to honour monuments of human salvation would only approach them on his knees.

It was a passage at the back of the house, bordered on the right hand by a little rivulet, which separated it from the garden, and on the left by the courtyard wall; at the end was a private door, which opened into the Church of the Cordeliers. Madame de Warens was about to enter by this door, but on hearing my voice instantly turned about. What an effect did the sight of her produce! I expected to see a devout, forbidding old woman — Monsieur de Pontverre's pious and worthy lady could be no other in my conception — instead of which I saw a face beaming with charms, fine blue eyes full of sweetness, a complexion which dazzled the sight, the contour of an enchanting bosom — nothing escaped the eager eye of the young proselyte; from that instant I was hers! a religion preached by such missionaries must lead to paradise! My missive was presented with a trembling hand; she took it with a smile — opened it, glanced an eye over Monsieur de Pontverre's letter and returned to mine, which she read through, and would have read again, had not her footman that instant informed her that service was beginning. 'Child,' she said, in a tone of voice which made every nerve vibrate, 'you are wandering about at an early age — it is really a pity!' — and, without waiting for an answer, added, 'Go to my house, bid them give you something for breakfast: after mass I will speak to you.'

Louise-Eléonore de Warens was demoiselle de la Tour de Pil, a noble and ancient family of Vévai, a town in the country of Vaud. She was married very young to Monsieur de Warens, of the house of Loys, eldest son of Monsieur de Villardin, of Lausanne. There were no children by this marriage, which was far from being a happy one. At length some domestic uneasiness made Madame de Warens take the resolution of crossing the lake, and throwing herself at the feet of King Victor Amadeus, who was then at Evian; thus abandoning her husband, family, and country in a moment of mental excitement similar to mine, which precipitation she, too, has found sufficient time and reason to lament. The King, who was fond of appearing a zealous promoter of the Catholic faith, took her under his protection, and complimented her with a pension of fifteen hundred Piedmontese livres, which was a considerable appointment for a prince who never had the character of being generous; but, finding his liberality made some conjecture he had an affection for the lady, he sent her to Annecy, escorted by a detachment of his guards, where, under the direction of Michel Gabriel de Bernex, titular Bishop of Geneva, she abjured her former religion at the Convent of the Visitation.

I came to Annecy just six years after this event. Madame de Warens was then eight-and-twenty, being born with the century. Her beauty was of a lasting kind, consisting more in the expression of the countenance than in its mere features, and was still in its meridian; her manner was soothing and tender; a sweetness in her look, an angelic smile, a mouth like mine; she wore her hair (which was of an ash colour and uncommonly beautiful) with an air of negligence that made her appear still more interesting; she was short, and rather stout for her height, though by no means disagreeably so; but there could not be a more lovely face, a finer bosom, or hands and arms more exquisitely formed.

I find her very attractive Madame de Warens

Her education had been derived from such a variety of sources that it formed an extraordinary assemblage. Like me, she had lost her mother at her birth, and had received instruction as it chanced to present itself; she had learned something of her governess, something of her father, a little of her masters, but copiously of her lovers, particularly a Monsieur de Tavel, who, possessing both taste and information, adorned with them the mind of her he loved. These various instructions, not being properly arranged, tended to impede each other, and she did not acquire that degree of improvement her natural good sense was capable of receiving; she knew something of philosophy and physics, but not enough to eradicate the fondness she had imbibed from her father for empiricism and alchemy; she made elixirs, tinctures, balsams, pretended to secrets, and prepared magistery; while quacks and pretenders who beset her, and profited by her weakness, preyed upon her purse, and dissipated on their furnaces and chemistry and drugs those talents and charms which might have formed the delight of the best society.

But though interested wretches took advantage of her ill-applied education to obscure her natural good sense, her excellent heart retained its firmness; her amiable mildness, sensibility for the unfortunate, inexhaustible bounty, and open, cheerful frankness, knew no variation; even at the approach of old age, when attacked by various calamities, rendered more cutting by indigence, the serenity of her disposition preserved to the end of her life the pleasing gaiety of her happiest days.

Her errors proceeded from an inexhaustible fund of activity, which demanded perpetual employment. She found no satisfaction in the customary intrigues of her sex, but sought the direction of important enterprises and discoveries. In her place Madame de Longueville

would have been a mere trifler; in Madame de Longueville's situation she would have governed the state. Her talents did not accord with her fortune; what would have gained her distinction in a more elevated sphere became her ruin. In enterprises which suited her disposition she arranged the plan in her imagination, which was ever carried to its utmost extent, and the means she employed being proportioned rather to her ideas than abilities, she failed by the mismanagement of those on whom she depended, and was ruined where another would scarce have been a loser. This active disposition, which involved her in so many difficulties, was at least productive of one benefit, as it prevented her from passing the remainder of her life in the religious asylum she had chosen, which she had had some thought of doing. The simple and uniform life of a nun, the little cabals and gossipings of their parlour, were not adapted to a mind vigorous and active, which, every day forming new systems, had occasion for liberty to attempt their completion. The good Bishop de Bernex, with less wit than Francis of Sales, resembled him in many particulars, and Madame de Warens, whom he called his daughter, and who was like Madame de Chantal in several respects, might have increased the resemblance by retiring, like her, from the world, had she not been disgusted with the idle trifling of a convent. It was not want of zeal that prevented this amiable woman from giving those proofs of devotion which might have been expected from a new convert, under the immediate direction of a prelate. Whatever might have influenced her to change her religion, she was certainly sincere in that she had embraced. She might find occasion to repent having abjured her former faith, but no inclination to return to it. She not only died a good Catholic, but truly lived one; nay, I dare affirm — and I think I have read the secrets

of her heart — that it was only her aversion to singularity that prevented her acting the devotee in public; in a word, her piety was too sincere to give way to any affectation of it. But this is not the place to enlarge on her principles; I shall find other occasions to speak of them.

Let those who deny the existence of a sympathy of souls explain, if they know how, why the first glance, the first word of Madame de Warens inspired me, not only with a lively attachment, but with the most unbounded confidence, which has since known no abatement. Say this was love (which will at least appear doubtful to those who follow the story of our attachment), how could this passion from its very birth be attended with sentiments which are most foreign to its character, such as peace, serenity, security, and confidence? How, when making the first approach to an amiable and polished woman, whose situation in life was so superior to mine, so far above any I had yet encountered, on whom, in a great measure, depended my future fortune, by the degree of interest she might take in it — how, I say, with all this, did I feel myself as free, as much at my ease, as if I had been perfectly secure of pleasing her? Why did I not experience a moment of embarrassment, timidity, or restraint? Naturally bashful, easily confused, having seen nothing of the world, how could I, the first time, the first moment I beheld her, adopt caressing language, and a familiar tone, as readily as when after ten years, intimacy had rendered these freedoms natural? Is it possible to possess love — I will not say without desires, for I certainly had them — but without inquietude, without jealousy? Can we avoid feeling an anxious wish at least to know whether our affection is returned? Yet such a question never entered my imagination; I should as soon have inquired, Do I love myself? nor did she

ever express a greater degree of curiosity. There was certainly something extraordinary in my attachment to this charming woman, and it will be found in the sequel that some extravagances, which cannot be forseen, attended it.

What could be done for me was the present question, and, in order to discuss the point with greater freedom, she made me dine with her. This was the first meal in my life at which I had experienced a want of appetite; and her woman who waited observed it was the first time she had seen a traveller of my age and appearance deficient in that particular. This remark, which did me no injury in the opinion of her mistress, fell hard on an overgrown clown, who was my fellow-guest, and devoured sufficient to have served at least six moderate feeders. For me, I was too much charmed to think of eating; my heart cherished a delicious sensation, which engrossed my whole being, and left no room for other objects.

Madame de Warens wished to hear the particulars of my little history. All the vivacity I had lost during my servitude returned and assisted the recital. In proportion to the interest this excellent woman took in my story did she lament the fate to which I had exposed myself; compassion was painted on her features, in every look and gesture. She could not exhort me to return to Geneva, being too well aware that her words and actions were strictly scrutinised, and that such advice would be thought high treason against Catholicism; but she spoke so feelingly of the affliction I must give my father that it was easy to perceive she would have approved my returning to console him. Alas! she little thought how powerfully this pleaded against herself; the more eloquently persuasive she appeared, the less could I resolve to tear myself from her. I knew that returning to Geneva would be putting an insuperable barrier between us, unless I

repeated the expedient which had brought me here, and it was certainly better to adhere to my present course. I resolved to do so. Madame de Warens, seeing her endeavours would be fruitless, became less explicit, and only added, with an air of commiseration, 'Poor child, thou must go where Providence directs thee, but one day thou wilt think of me.' I believe she had no conception at that time how cruelly her prediction would be verified.

The difficulty still remained how, young as I was, I could gain a subsistence so far from home. Scarce half through my time of apprenticeship, I had but an imperfect knowledge of my trade, and, had I been more expert, Savoy was too poor a country to give much encouragement to the arts. The fellow who dined with us, and ate for us as well as for himself, being obliged to pause in order to gain some relaxation from the fatigue of eating, imparted a piece of advice which, according to him, came express from heaven, though, to judge by its effects, it appeared to proceed from a directly contrary quarter. This was that I should go to Turin, where, in a hospital instituted for the instruction of catechumens, I should find food, both spiritual and temporal, be reconciled to the bosom of the Church, and meet with some charitable Christians, who would make it a point to procure me a situation that would turn to my advantage. 'In regard to the expenses of the journey,' continued our adviser, 'his Grace my Lord Bishop will not be backward, when once Madame has proposed this holy work, to offer his charitable donation, and Madame the Baroness, whose charity is so well known (again looking down upon his plate), will certainly contribute.'

I was by no means pleased with all these charities. I said nothing, but my heart was full. Madame de Warens, who did not seem to think so highly of this expedient as

the projector pretended to do, contented herself by saying every one should endeavour to promote good actions, and that she would mention it to his lordship; but this meddling devil, who had some private interest in the affair, and questioned whether she would urge it to his satisfaction, took care to acquaint the almoners with my story, and so far influenced those good priests that when Madame de Warens, who disliked the journey on my account, mentioned it to the bishop, she found it so far concluded on that he immediately put into her hands the money designed for my little viaticum. She dared not advance anything against it: I was approaching an age when a woman like her could not with any propriety appear anxious to retain the society of a young man.

My departure being thus determined by those who undertook the management of my concerns, I had only to submit; and I did it without much repugnance. Though Turin was a greater distance from Madame de Warens than Geneva, yet, being the capital of the country I was now in, it seemed to have more connection with Annecy than a city under a different government and of a contrary religion; besides, as I undertook this journey in obedience to her, I considered myself as living under her direction, which was more than merely to continue in the neighbourhood; to sum up all, the idea of a long journey coincided with my passion for rambling, which already began to assert itself. To pass the mountains to my youthful eye appeared delightful; how charming the reflection of elevating myself above my companions by the whole height of the Alps! To see the world is an almost irresistible temptation to a Genevan; accordingly I gave my consent. He who had suggested the journey was to set off in two days with his wife. I was confided and recommended to their care. They were likewise the bearers of my purse, which had been augmented by

Madame de Warens, who, not contented with these kindnesses, secretly gave me a small pecuniary reinforcement, attended with ample instructions, and we departed on the Wednesday before Easter.

The next day my father arrived at Annecy, following on my trail, and accompanied by his friend, a Monsieur Rival, who was likewise a watchmaker; he was a man of sense and letters, who wrote better verses than La Motte, and spoke almost as well; what is still more to his praise, he was a man of the strictest integrity, but whose taste for literature only served to make one of his sons a comedian.

These gentlemen saw Madame de Warens, and contented themselves with lamenting with her my fate, instead of overtaking me, which (as they were on horseback and I on foot) they might have accomplished with ease. My uncle Bernard did the same thing. He arrived at Confignon, received information that I had gone to Annecy, and immediately returned to Geneva. Thus my nearest relations seemed to have conspired with my star to consign me to the fate that awaited me. By a similar negligence, my brother was lost, and so entirely lost that it was never known what had become of him.

My father was not only a man of honour, but of the strictest probity, and endued with that magnanimity which frequently produces the most shining virtues. I may add, he was a good father, particularly to me, whom he tenderly loved; but he likewise loved his pleasures, and since we had been separated other connections had weakened his paternal affection. He had married again at Nyon, and, though his second wife was too old to expect children, she had relations. My father was united to another family, surrounded by other objects, and a variety of cares prevented my returning often to his remembrance. He was in the decline of life, and had nothing

to support the inconveniences of old age; my mother's property devolved to me and my brother, but during our absence the interest of it was enjoyed by my father. This consideration had no immediate effect on his conduct, nor did it blind his sense of duty; but it had an imperceptible effect, and prevented him making use of that exertion to regain me which he would otherwise have employed; and this I think was the reason that, having traced me as far as Annecy, he stopped short, without proceeding to Chambéri, where he might have almost certainly found me; and likewise explains why, on visiting him several times since my flight, he always received me with great kindness, but never made great efforts to retain me.

This conduct in a father, whose affection and virtue I was so well convinced of, has given birth to reflections on the regulation of my own conduct which have greatly contributed to preserve the integrity of my heart. It has taught me this great lesson of morality, perhaps the only one that can have any conspicuous influence on our actions, that we should ever carefully avoid putting our interest in competition with our duty, or promise ourselves felicity from the misfortunes of others; certain that in such circumstances, however sincere our love of virtue may be, sooner or later it will give way, and we shall imperceptibly become unjust and wicked in fact, however upright in our intentions.

This maxim, strongly imprinted on my mind, and reduced, though rather too late, to practice, has given my conduct an appearance of folly and whimsicality, not only in public, but still more among my acquaintances. It has been said that I affected originality, and sought to act differently from others. The truth is I neither endeavoured to conform or be singular, I desired only to act virtuously, and avoid situations which, by setting my interest in opposition to that of another person,

might inspire me with a secret though involuntary wish to his disadvantage.

Two years ago, my Lord Marshal would have put my name in his will, which I took every method to prevent, assuring him I would not for the world be conscious of my name being in the will of any person, much less in his. He gave up the idea; but insisted, in return, that I should accept an annuity on his life; this I consented to. It will be said, I find my account in the alteration; perhaps I may: but oh, my benefactor, my father! I am now sensible that, should I have the misfortune to survive you, I should have everything to lose, nothing to gain.

This, in my idea, is true philosophy, the only species consonant with the human heart; every day do I receive fresh conviction of its profound solidity. I have variously enforced it in all my later writings, but the multitude read too superficially to have noted it. If I survive my present undertaking, and am able to begin another, I mean, in a continuation of *Émile*, to give such a lively and striking example of this maxim as cannot fail to draw the reader's attention.[1] But, having made reflections enough for a traveller, it is time to continue my journey.

It turned out more agreeable than I expected: my clownish conductor was not so morose as he appeared to be. He was a middle-aged man, wore his black grisly hair in a queue, had a martial air, a strong voice, a firm step, was tolerably cheerful, and, to make up for not having been taught any trade, could turn his hand to every one. Having proposed to establish some kind of manufactory at Annecy, he had consulted Madame de Warens, who immediately gave in to the project, and he was now going to Turin to lay the plan before the minister and get his approbation, for which journey he took care to be well provided. This man had the art of ingratiating

[1] See *La Nouvelle Héloise*, Part iii, 20.

himself with the priests, whom he ever appeared eager to serve; he adopted a certain jargon which he had learned by frequenting their company, and thought himself a notable preacher; he could even repeat one passage from the Bible in Latin, and it answered his purpose as well as if he had known a thousand, for he repeated it a thousand times a day. He was seldom at a loss for money when he knew what purse contained it; yet was rather artful than knavish, and, when dealing out in an affected tone his unmeaning discourses, resembled Peter the Hermit, preaching the crusade with a sabre by his side.

Madame Sabran, his wife, was a tolerably good sort of woman, more peaceable by day than by night; as I slept in the same chamber I was frequently disturbed by her wakefulness, and should have been more so had I comprehended the cause of it; but I was in the chapter of dulness, which left to nature the whole care of my own instruction.

I went on gaily with my pious guide and his restless companion, no sinister accident impeding our journey. I was in the happiest circumstances both of mind and body that I ever recollect having experienced; young, vigorous, full of health and security, placing confidence in myself and others; in that short but charming moment of human life when its expansive energy carries, if I may so express myself, our being to the utmost extent of our sensations, embellishing all nature with the charm of existence. My pleasing inquietudes became less wandering: I had now an object on which imagination could fix. I looked on myself as the work, the pupil, the friend, almost the lover, of Madame de Warens. The obliging things she had said; the caresses she had bestowed on me; the tender interest she seemed to take in me; those charming looks, which seemed replete with love, because they so powerfully inspired it, every consideration

flattered my ideas during this journey, and furnished the most delicious reveries, which no doubt, no fear of my future condition arose to embitter. In sending me to Turin, I thought they undertook to find me an agreeable subsistence there. Thus eased of every care, I passed lightly on, while young desires, enchanting hopes, and brilliant prospects employed my mind; each object that presented itself seemed to ensure my approaching felicity. I imagined that every house was filled with joyous festivity, the meadows resounded with sports and revelry, the rivers offered refreshing baths, fish wantoned in their streams, and how delightful was it to ramble along the flowery banks! The trees were loaded with the choicest fruits, while their shade offered voluptuous retreats to happy lovers; the mountains abounded with milk and cream; peace and leisure, simplicity and joy, mingled with the charm of going I knew not whither, and everything I saw carried to my heart some new cause for rapture. The grandeur, variety, and real beauty of the scene in some measure rendered the charm reasonable, in which vanity came in for its share. To go so young to Italy, view such an extent of country, and pursue the route of Hannibal over the Alps, appeared a glory beyond my age; add to all this our frequent and agreeable halts, with a good appetite and plenty to satisfy it; for in truth it was not worth while to be sparing — at Monsieur Sabran's table what I ate could scarce be missed.

In the whole course of my life I cannot recollect an interval more perfectly exempt from care than the seven or eight days of our passing from Annecy to Turin. As we were obliged to walk Madame Sabran's pace, it rather appeared an agreeable stroll than a fatiguing journey. There still remains the most pleasing impression of it on my mind; and the idea of a pedestrian excursion, particularly among the mountains, has from this time

seemed delightful. It was only in my happiest days that I travelled on foot, and ever with the most unbounded satisfaction; afterwards, occupied with business and encumbered with baggage, I was forced to act the gentleman and employ a carriage, where care, embarrassment, and restraint were sure to be my companions, and instead of being delighted with the journey, I only wished to arrive at my destination. I sought for a long time, at Paris, to meet with two companions of similar disposition, who would each agree to appropriate fifty louis of his funds and a year of his time to making the tour of Italy on foot, with no other attendance than a young fellow to carry our necessaries. I have met with many who seemed enchanted with the project, but, indeed, considered it only as a mere castle in Spain, which served well enough to talk of, without any design of putting the scheme in execution. One day, speaking with enthusiasm of this project to Diderot and Grimm, they gave in to the proposal with such warmth that I thought the matter concluded on; but the proposal shrank to a journey on paper, in which Grimm thought nothing so pleasant as making Diderot commit a number of impieties, and shutting me up in the Inquisition for them, instead of him.

My regret at arriving so soon at Turin was tempered by the pleasure of viewing a large city, and the hope of figuring there in a conspicuous character, for my brain already began to be intoxicated with the fumes of ambition. My present situation appeared infinitely above that of an apprentice, and I was far from foreseeing how soon I should be much below it.

Before I proceed I ought to offer an excuse or justification to the reader for the great number of uninteresting particulars I am necessitated to repeat. In pursuance of the resolution I have formed to enter on this public exhibition of myself, it is necessary that nothing should bear

the appearance of obscurity or concealment. I should be continually under the eye of the reader; he should be enabled to follow me in all the wanderings of my heart, through every intricacy of my adventures; he must find no void or chasm in my relation, nor lose sight of me an instant, lest he should find occasion to say, What was he doing at this time? and suspect me of not having dared to reveal the whole. I give sufficient scope to malignity in what I say, and it is unnecessary I should furnish still more by my silence.

My money was all gone, even that which I had secretly received from Madame de Warens. I had been so indiscreet as to divulge this secret, and my conductors had taken care to profit by it. Madame Sabran found means to deprive me of everything I had, even to a ribbon embroidered with silver, with which Madame de Warens had adorned the hilt of my sword. This I regretted more than all the rest. The sword itself would have gone the same way, had I been less obstinately bent on retaining it. They had, it is true, supported me during the journey, but left me nothing at the end of it; and I arrived at Turin without money, clothes, or linen, being precisely in the situation to owe to my merit alone the whole honour of that fortune I was about to acquire.

I took care to deliver the letters I was charged with, and was immediately conducted to the hospital of the catechumens, to be instructed in that religion which in return would bestow subsistence. On entering, I passed an iron-barred gate, which was directly double-locked on me; this beginning was more imposing than pleasing, and set me thinking. I was then conducted to a large apartment, whose sole furniture consisted of a wooden altar at the farther end, on which was a large crucifix, and round it four or five chairs, that had the appearance of having been polished, but whose glossiness was only

occasioned by constant use. In this hall
were assembled four or five ill-looking bandit
rades in instruction, who would rather have
for trusty servants of the Devil than candida
kingdom of Heaven. Two of these fellows w
onians, but gave out they were Moors or Jews,
they assured me) had run through Spain and It
bracing the Christian faith and being baptized
ever they thought it worth the trouble. Soon after they opened another iron gate, which divided a large balcony that overlooked a courtyard, and by this avenue entered our sister catechumens, who, like me, were going to be regenerated, not by baptism, but a solemn abjuration. A viler set of idle, dirty, abandoned harlots never brought their ill odour into the fold of God: one among them, however, appeared pretty and interesting; she might be about my own age, perhaps a year or two older, and had a pair of roguish eyes, which frequently encountered mine. This was enough to inspire me with the desire of becoming acquainted with her, but she had been so strongly recommended to the care of the old governess of this respectable sisterhood, and was so narrowly watched by the pious missionary, who laboured for her conversion with more zeal than diligence, that during the two months we remained together in this house (where she had already been three) I found it absolutely impossible to exchange a word with her. She must have been extremely stupid, though she had not the appearance of it, for never was a longer course of instruction; the holy man could never bring her to a state of mind fit for abjuration; meantime she became weary of her cloister, declaring that, Christian or not, she would stay there no longer: and they were obliged to take her at her word, lest she should grow refractory, and insist on departing as great a sinner as she came.

...ttle community was assembled in honour of the ...er. Our guides made us a short exhortation. ...njured to be obedient to the grace that Heaven ...owed on me; the rest were admonished to assist ...n their prayers, and give me edification by their ... example. Our virgins then retired to their apart...ents, and I was left to contemplate, at leisure, that wherein I found myself.

The next morning we were again assembled for instruction. I now began to reflect, for the first time, on the step I was about to take and the circumstances which had led me to it.

I repeat, and shall perhaps repeat again, an assertion of whose truth I every day receive fresh conviction, which is, that if ever child received a reasonable and virtuous education, it was myself. Born in a family of unexceptionable morals, every lesson I received was replete with maxims of prudence and virtue. My father, though fond of gallantry, not only possessed distinguished probity, but much religion; in the world he appeared a man of pleasure, in his family he was a Christian, and implanted early in my mind those sentiments of which he felt the force. My three aunts were women of virtue and piety; the two elder were professed devotees, and the third, who united all the graces of wit and good sense, was perhaps more truly religious than either, though with less ostentation. From the bosom of this amiable family I was transplanted to Monsieur Lambercier's, a man dedicated to the ministry, who truly believed the doctrine he taught, and acted up to its precepts. He and his sister matured by their instructions those principles of judicious piety I had already imbibed; and the means employed by these worthy people were so well adapted to the effect they meant to produce, that so far from being fatigued, I scarce ever listened to a sermon without

finding myself sensibly affected, and forming resolutions to live virtuously, from which, except in moments of forgetfulness, I seldom swerved. At my aunt Bernard's, religion was rather more tiresome, because they made it an employment; with my master I thought no more of it, though my sentiments continued the same. I had no companions to vitiate my morals; I became a scapegrace, not a libertine.

I possessed as much religion, therefore, as a child of my age could be supposed capable of acquiring. Why should I now disguise my thoughts? I am persuaded I had more. In my childhood I was not a child; I felt, I thought, as a man. As I advanced in years I merged into the ordinary class: in my infancy I was distinguished from it. I shall doubtless incur ridicule by thus modestly holding myself up for a prodigy. I am content. Let those who find themselves disposed laugh their fill; afterward, let them find a child that at six years old is delighted, interested, affected with romances, even to the shedding of floods of tears; then shall I feel my ridiculous vanity, and acknowledge my error.

Thus when I said that we should not converse with children on religion, if we wished them ever to possess any; when I asserted that they were incapable of communion with the Supreme Being, even in our confined degree, I drew my conclusions from observation, not from my experience; I knew that from it others could draw no conclusions. Find Jean-Jacques Rousseaus of six years old, talk to them of God at seven, and I will be answerable that the experiment will be attended with no danger.

It is understood, I believe, that a child, or even a man, is likely to be most sincere in following in that religion in which he was born and educated; we frequently detract from, seldom make any additions to it: dogmatic

faith is the effect of education. In addition to this general principle, which attached me to the religion of my forefathers, I had that particular aversion our city entertains for Catholicism, which is represented there as a monstrous idolatry, and whose clergy are painted in the blackest colours. This sentiment was so firmly imprinted on my mind that I never looked into their churches, I never met a priest in his surplice, and never did I hear the bells of a procession sound, without shuddering with horror. These sensations soon vanished in great cities, but frequently returned in those country parishes which bore most similarity to the spot where I had first experienced them. Meantime this dislike was singularly contrasted by the remembrance of those caresses which priests in the neighbourhood of Geneva are fond of bestowing on the children of that city. If the bells of the viaticum alarmed me, the chiming for mass or vespers called me to a breakfast, a collation, to the pleasure of regaling on fresh butter, fruits, or milk. The good cheer of Monsieur de Pontverre, too, had produced a considerable effect on me; my former abhorrence began to diminish, and, looking on Popery through the medium of amusement and good living, I easily reconciled myself to the idea of enduring it, though I had never entertained but a very transient and distant idea of making a solemn profession of it. At this moment such a transaction appeared in all its horrors. I shuddered at the engagement I had entered into, and its inevitable consequences. The future neophytes with whom I was surrounded were not calculated to sustain my courage by their example, and I could not help considering the holy work I was about to perform as the action of a villain. Though young, I was sufficiently convinced that, whatever religion might be the true one, I was about to sell mine; and, even should I chance to choose the best, I lied to the

Holy Ghost, and merited the disdain of mankind. The more I considered, the more I despised myself, and trembled at the fate which had led me into such a predicament, as if my present situation had not been of my own seeking. There were moments when these compunctions were so strong that, had I found the door open but for an instant, I should certainly have made my escape. But this was impossible; nor was the resolution of any long duration.

Too many secret motives fought against it. Besides, my fixed determination not to return to Geneva, the shame that would attend it, the difficulty of repassing the mountains, the distance from my country, without friends and without resources — everything concurred to make me regard my remorse of conscience as a too late repentance. I affected to reproach myself for what I had done, in order to excuse what I intended to do, and, by aggravating the errors of the past, looked on the future as an inevitable consequence. I did not say, Nothing is yet done, and you may be innocent if you please; but I said, Tremble at the crime you have committed, which hath reduced you to the necessity of going on unto the end.

It required more resolution than was natural to my age to revoke all that I might have promised myself or hoped for, to break those chains with which I was enthralled, and resolutely declare that I would continue in the religion of my forefathers, whatever might be the consequence. I was too young for such strength of mind — even had I possessed it, success was not probable. The affair was already too far advanced, and the greater my resistance, the more certainly they would have made a point of bringing it to a conclusion.

The sophism which ruined me has had a similar effect on the greater part of mankind, who lament the want of

resolution when the opportunity for exercising it is over. The practice of virtue is only difficult from our own negligence; were we always discreet, we should seldom have occasion for any painful exertion of it. We are captivated by desires we might readily surmount, give in to temptations that might easily be resisted, and insensibly get into embarrassing, perilous situations, from which we cannot extricate ourselves but with the utmost difficulty; intimidated by the effort, we fall into the abyss, saying to the Almighty, 'Why hast Thou made us such weak creatures?' But, notwithstanding our vain pretexts, He replies, by our consciences, 'I formed ye too weak to get out of the gulf, because I gave ye sufficient strength not to have fallen into it.'

I was not absolutely resolved to become a Catholic, but, as it was not necessary to declare my intentions immediately, I gradually accustomed myself to the idea, hoping meantime that some unforeseen event would extricate me from my embarrassment. In order to gain time, I resolved to make the best defence I possibly could in favour of my own opinion; but my vanity soon rendered this resolution unnecessary, for, on finding I frequently embarrassed those who had the care of my instruction, I wished to heighten my triumph by giving them a complete overthrow. I zealously pursued my plan, not without the ridiculous hope of being able to convert my converters; for I was simple enough to believe that, could I convince them of their errors, they would become Protestants.

They did not find, therefore, that facility in the work which they had expected, as I differed from them both in regard to will and knowledge. Protestants, in general, are better instructed in the principles of their religion than Catholics; the reason is obvious, the doctrine of the former requires discussion, of the latter, submission.

The Catholic must content himself with the decision of others; the Protestant must learn to decide for himself. They were not ignorant of this, but neither my age nor my appearance promised much difficulty to men so accustomed to disputation. They knew, likewise, that I had not received my first communion, nor the instructions which accompany it; but, on the other hand, they had no idea of the information I had received with Monsieur Lambercier, or that I had learnt the History of the Church and Empire almost by heart at my father's; and though, since that time, nearly forgotten, when warmed by disputation it again returned to my memory.

A little old priest, but tolerably venerable, held the first conference, at which we were all convened. On the part of my comrades, it was rather a catechism than a controversy, and he found more pains in giving them instruction than in answering their objections; but, when it came to my turn, it was a different matter. I stopped him at every article, and did not spare a single remark that I thought would create a difficulty. This rendered the conference long and extremely tiresome to the audience. My old priest talked a good deal, grew very warm, frequently rambled from the subject, and extricated himself from the difficulties by saying he was not well versed in the French language. The next day, lest my indiscreet objections should injure the minds of those who were better disposed, I was taken into a separate chamber, and put under the care of a younger priest, a fine speaker; that is, one who was fond of long perplexed sentences, and proud of his own abilities, if ever doctor was. I did not, however, suffer myself to be intimidated by his overbearing looks: and being sensible that I could maintain my ground, I took up the cudgels with confidence, and laid about me in the best manner I was able. He thought to overwhelm me at once with

Saint Augustine, Saint Gregory, and the rest of the Fathers, but found, to his ineffable surprise, that I could handle these almost as dexterously as himself; not that I had ever read them, or he either, perhaps, but I retained a number of passages taken from my Le Sueur, and when he bore hard on me with one citation, without standing to dispute, I parried it with another, which often embarrassed him extremely. At length, however, he got the better of me for two very potent reasons; in the first place, he was of the strongest side, and, young as I was, I thought it might be dangerous to drive him to extremities, for I knew that the little old priest was satisfied neither with me nor my erudition. In the next place, the young priest had studied, I had not; this gave a degree of method to his arguments which I could not follow; and, whenever he found himself pressed by an unforeseen objection he, put it off to the next conference, saying that I was rambling from the question. Sometimes he even rejected all my citations, maintaining that they were false, and, offering to fetch the book, defied me to find them. He knew he ran very little risk, and that, with all my borrowed learning, I was not sufficiently accustomed to books, and too poor a Latinist, to find a passage in a large volume, had I been ever so well assured it was there. I even suspected him of being guilty of a perfidy of which he accused our ministers, and that he fabricated passages sometimes in order to evade an objection that incommoded him.

During the progress of these wranglings, the days being passed in disputing, in mumbling prayers, and in petty knaveries, there happened to me a little adventure which might have been of ill consequence.

There is no mind so vile, no heart so hard, as not to be capable of some species of attachment. One of the two bandits who styled themselves Moors took a fancy to me. He was ever ready to accost me, chatted to me in his

jargon, showed me attentions, and shared with me now and then his portion at meals. Though naturally disliking this fellow's gingerbread face, adorned with a long scar, I endured him, saying to myself, 'The poor man has conceived a lively affection for me; it would be cruel to repel him.' By degrees his manner became more unrestrained, and he made such strange proposals in such singular terms that I imagined his mind must have given way. I began to think him odious, for he was uncleanly, and stank of the tobacco which he was fond of chewing. One day we were together in the hall, when he recommenced his coarse familiarities. I grew alarmed, quickly disengaged myself, and sprang backward with an exclamation, whereupon he left me, and I ran out upon the balcony. He seemed to be seized with a kind of frenzy; nothing could be more hideous than his inflamed, revolting countenance. Never, indeed, have I seen another man in a like condition.

I was eager to impart to everybody the news of what had occurred, for I was ignorant of its purport. Our old directress bade me hold my tongue, but I could hear her muttering, 'Can maladet! brutta bestia!' Unable to perceive any reason for silence, I continued to babble; so much so, that on the following morning one of the administrators came and addressed to me a sharp reprimand, accusing me of blemishing the good name of a holy institution, and magnifying a petty fault. He gravely informed me that there was no cause for extreme irritation, and told me frankly that he himself in his youth had experienced similar attentions. We had another listener, an ecclesiastic, who took the affair as coolly as he. Their easy tone imposed on me, and I listened without anger, but not without disgust. My aversion extended to the apologist; and I was hardly able to conceal from him the ill effect of his lessons. He turned on me a look which

boded nothing favourable, and thenceforth did what he could to render my stay in the house disagreeable — with such good effect, indeed, that, perceiving but one way of escape, I became as eager to adopt it as I formerly had been to avoid it.

As for the hateful African, I know not how they dealt with him. Dame Lorenza excepted, no one appeared to regard him with a less friendly eye. Meanwhile he ceased to notice or speak to me. A week afterwards he was baptized with much ceremony, attired from head to foot in white garments, to symbolise the purity of his regenerate soul.

My turn came a month after; for all this time was thought necessary by my directors, that they might have the honour of a difficult conversion, and every dogma of their faith was recapitulated, in order to triumph the more completely over my new docility.

At length, sufficiently instructed and disposed to the will of my masters, I was led in procession to the Metropolitan Church of St. John, there to make a solemn abjuration, and undergo a ceremony made use of on these occasions, which, though not baptism, is very similar, and serves to persuade the people that Protestants are not Christians. I was clothed in a kind of grey robe made for these occasions, decorated with white brandenburgs. Two men, one behind, the other before me, carried copper basins, which they kept striking with a key, and in which those who were charitably disposed put their alms, according as they found themselves influenced by religion or goodwill for the new convert; in a word, nothing of Catholic pageantry was omitted that could render the solemnity edifying to the populace or humiliating to me. The white dress might have been serviceable, but as I had not the honour to be either Moor or Jew they did not think fit to compliment me with it.

The affair did not end here. I must now go to the Inquisition to be absolved from the sin of heresy, and return to the bosom of the Church with the same ceremony to which Henry the Fourth was subjected by his Ambassador. The air and manner of the right reverend Father Inquisitor were not calculated to dissipate the secret horror that had seized my spirits on entering this holy mansion. After several questions relative to my faith, situation, and family, he asked me bluntly if my mother was damned. Terror repressed the first gust of indignation; this gave me time to recollect myself, and I answered, 'I hope not, for God may have enlightened her last moments.' The monk made no reply, but his grimace was by no means expressive of approbation.

All these ceremonies ended, at the very moment I flattered myself I should be plentifully provided for, they exhorted me to continue a good Christian, and live in obedience to the grace I had received; then wishing me good fortune, with rather more than twenty francs of small money in my pocket, the produce of the above-mentioned collection, they shut the door on me, and all was over.

Thus, in a moment, all my flattering expectations were at an end, and nothing remained from my interested conversion but the remembrance of having been both dupe and apostate. It is easy to imagine what a sudden revolution was produced in my ideas, when every brilliant expectation of advancement terminated by my seeing myself plunged in the completest misery. In the morning I was deliberating what palace I should inhabit; before night I was reduced to seek my lodging in the street. It may be supposed that I gave myself up to transports of despair, rendered more bitter by a consciousness that my own folly had reduced me to these extremities. Nothing of the sort: I had passed two months in absolute confine-

ment: this was new to me; I was now emancipated, and the sentiment I felt most forcibly was joy at my recovered liberty. After a slavery which had appeared tedious, I was again master of my time and actions, in a great city, abundant in resources, crowded with people of fortune, to whom my merit and talents could not fail to recommend me. I had besides sufficient time before me to expect this good fortune, for my twenty francs seemed an inexhaustible treasure, which I might dispose of without rendering an account to any one. It was the first time I had found myself so rich; and, far from giving way to melancholy reflections, I only adopted other hopes, in which self-love was by no means a loser. Never did I feel so great a degree of confidence and security. I looked on my fortune as already made, and was pleased to think that I was under obligation to no one save myself.

The first thing I did was to satisfy my curiosity by rambling all over the city, considering this as a confirmation of my liberty. I went to see the soldiers mount guard, and was delighted with their military music. I followed processions, and was pleased with the chanting of the priests. I next went to see the King's palace, which I approached with awe, but seeing others enter I followed their example, and no one hindered me. Perhaps I owed this favour to the small parcel I carried under my arm; be that as it may, I conceived a high opinion of my consequence from being within the gates, and already thought myself an inhabitant. The weather was hot; I had walked about till I was both fatigued and hungry. Wishing for some refreshment, I went into a milk-house; they brought me some cream-cheese, curds and whey, with two slices of that excellent Piedmontese bread which I prefer to any other; and for five or six sous I had one of the most delicious meals I ever recollect to have made.

It was time to seek a lodging. As I already knew enough of the Piedmontese language to make myself understood, this was a work of no great difficulty; and I had so much prudence that I wished to adapt it rather to the state of my purse than the bent of my inclination. In the course of my inquiries I was informed that a soldier's wife in the Rue du Pô furnished lodgings to servants out of place at one sou a night, and finding one of her beds disengaged I took possession of it. She was young, and newly married, though she already had five or six children. Mother, children, and lodgers all slept in the same chamber, and it continued thus while I remained there. She was good-natured, swore like a carter, and wore neither cap nor kerchief; but she had a gentle heart, was very obliging, and to me both kind and serviceable.

For several days I gave myself up to the pleasures of independence and curiosity. I continued wandering about the city and its environs, examining every object that seemed curious or new; and, indeed, most things had that appearance to a novice who had never seen a capital. I never omitted visiting the court, and assisted regularly every morning at the King's mass. I thought it a great honour to be in the same chapel with this Prince and his retinue; but my passion for music, which now began to make its appearance, was a greater incentive than the splendour of the court, which, soon seen and always the same, loses its attraction. The King of Sardinia had at that time the best orchestra in Europe; Somis, Desjardins, and the Bezuzzis shone there alternately: all these were not necessary to fascinate a youth whom the sound of the most simple instrument, provided it was correctly played, transported with joy. Beyond this, magnificence only produced in me a stupid admiration, without any eagerness to partake of it; my thoughts were principally employed in observing whether any young

princess was present who merited my homage, and whom I could make the heroine of a romance.

Meantime, I was on the point of beginning one; in a less elevated sphere, it is true, but where, could I have brought it to a conclusion, I should have found pleasures a thousand times more delicious.

Though I lived with the strictest economy, my purse insensibly grew lighter. This economy was, however, less the effect of prudence than a love of simplicity, which, even to this day, the frequenting of the most expensive tables has not been able to vitiate. Nothing, in my idea, either at that time or since, can exceed a rustic repast. Give me milk, vegetables, eggs, cheese, and brown bread, with tolerable wine, and I shall always think myself sumptuously regaled; a good appetite will furnish out the rest, when a *maître d'hôtel* and his lackeys cannot satiate me with their importunate attentions. Six or seven sous would then procure me a more agreeable meal than as many francs could have done since. I was abstemious, therefore, for want of a temptation to be otherwise; though I do not know but I am wrong to call this abstinence — to me it was the height of sensuousness. With my pears, new cheese, bread, and some glasses of Montferrat wine, which you might have cut with a knife, I was the happiest of epicures. Notwithstanding my expenses were very moderate, it was possible to see the end of twenty francs. I was every day more convinced of this, and, spite of the giddiness of youth, my apprehensions for the future amounted almost to terror. All my castles in Spain were vanished, and I became sensible of the necessity of seeking some occupation that would procure me a subsistence. Even this was a work of difficulty. I thought of my former trade, but knew too little of it to be employed as a journeyman, nor do masters abound at Turin. I resolved, therefore, till something

better presented itself, to go from shop to shop, offering to engrave ciphers, or coats of arms, on pieces of plate, and hoped to get employment by working at a low price, or taking what they chose to give me. Even this expedient did not answer my expectation; almost all my applications were ineffectual, the little I procured being hardly sufficient to produce a few scanty meals. However, walking one morning pretty early in the Contrà Nova, I saw a young tradeswoman behind a counter, whose figure and looks were so charmingly attractive, that, notwithstanding my timidity with ladies, I entered the shop without hesitation, and offered my service as usual, and had the happiness to have it accepted. She did not repel me, but made me sit down and relate my little history; pitied my forlorn situation; bade me be cheerful, saying that if I were every good Christian would give me assistance; then (while she sent to a goldsmith's in the neighbourhood for some tools I had occasion for) she went into the kitchen and fetched me something for breakfast. This seemed a promising beginning, nor was what followed less flattering: she was satisfied with my work, and when I had a little recovered myself, still more with my discourse. She was rather elegantly dressed, and notwithstanding her gentle looks, this gay appearance had disconcerted me; but her good-nature, the compassionate tone of her voice, with her gentle and caressing manner, soon set me at ease. I saw my endeavours to please were crowned with success, and this assurance made me succeed the more. Though an Italian, and too pretty to be entirely devoid of coquetry, she had so much modesty, and I so great a share of timidity, that our adventure was not likely to be brought to a very speedy conclusion, nor did they give us time to complete it happily. I cannot recall the few short moments I passed with this woman without being sensible of an inexpressible charm, and can still

say it was there that I tasted in perfection the most delightful as well as the purest pleasures of love.

She was a lively, pleasing brunette, and the good-nature that was painted on her lovely face rendered her vivacity more interesting. She was called Madame Basile. Her husband, who was considerably older than herself, and a little jealous, consigned her, during his absence, to the care of a clerk, too disagreeable to be thought dangerous; but who, notwithstanding, had pretensions that he seldom showed any signs of, except in the way of ill-humour, a good share of which he bestowed on me, though I was pleased to hear him play the flute, of which he was a tolerable master. This second Egisthus was sure to grumble whenever he saw me go into his mistress's apartment, treating me with a degree of disdain which she took care to repay with interest, seeming pleased to caress me in his presence, on purpose to torment him. This kind of revenge, though perfectly to my taste, would have been still more charming in a *tête-à-tête*, but she did not proceed so far; at least there was a difference. Whether she thought me too young, that she had not the art of making advances, or that she was seriously resolved to be virtuous, she had at such times a kind of reserve which, though not absolutely discouraging, kept my passion within bounds. I did not feel the same real and tender respect for her as for Madame de Warens. I was embarrassed, agitated, feared to look, and hardly dared to breathe in her presence, yet to have left her would have been worse than death. How fondly did my eyes devour whatever they could gaze on without being perceived! — the flowers on her gown, the point of her pretty foot, the interval of a round white arm that appeared between her glove and ruffle, the like interval sometimes apparent between her bodice and kerchief — each object increased the force of the rest. Gazing thus on what was to be seen, and even

more, my sight became confused, my chest seemed contracted, respiration was every moment more painful. I had the utmost difficulty to hide my agitation, to prevent my sighs from being heard, and this difficulty was increased by the silence in which we were frequently plunged. Happily Madame Basile, busy at her work, saw nothing of all this, or seemed not to see it; yet I sometimes observed a kind of sympathy, especially by the frequent rising of her kerchief, and this dangerous sight almost mastered every effort; but when on the point of giving way to my transports, she spoke a few words to me with an air of tranquillity, which restored me to my senses.

I saw her several times alone in this manner, without a word, a gesture, or even a look too expressive, making the least intelligence between us. This situation was both my torment and delight, for hardly in the simplicity of my heart could I imagine the cause of my uneasiness. I should suppose these *tête-à-tête* meetings could not be displeasing to her: at least she sought pretty frequent occasions to renew them. This was a very disinterested labour, certainly, as appeared by the use she made, or ever suffered me to make, of them.

Being one day wearied with the clerk's commonplace discourse, she had retired to her chamber. I made haste to finish what I had to do in the back shop, and followed her. The door was half-open, and I entered without being perceived. She was embroidering near a window on the opposite side of the room; she could not see me, and the carts in the streets made too much noise for me to be heard. She was always well dressed, but this day her attire bordered on coquetry. Her attitude was graceful; her head, leaning gently forward, discovered the whiteness of her neck; her hair, elegantly dressed, was ornamented with flowers; her figure was universally charming, and I had an uninterrrupted opportunity to

admire it. I was absolutely in a state of ecstasy; and, involuntarily sinking on my knees, I passionately extended my arms towards her, certain she could not hear, and having no conception that she could see me; but there was a chimney-glass at the end of the room that betrayed me. I am ignorant what effect this transport produced on her; she did not speak, she did not look at me; but, partly turning her head, with the movement of her finger only, she pointed to the mat which was at her feet. To start up, with an articulate cry of joy, and occupy the place she had indicated was the work of a moment; but it will hardly be believed, I dared attempt no more, not even to speak, raise my eyes to hers, or rest an instant on her knees, though in an attitude which seemed to render such a support necessary. I was dumb, immoveable, but far enough from a state of tranquillity — all agitation, joy, gratitude, ardent indefinite wishes, restrained by the fear of giving displeasure, which my unpractised heart too much dreaded.

She appeared neither more tranquil nor less intimidated than myself. Uneasy at my present situation, confounded at having brought me there, beginning to tremble for the effects of a sign which she had made without reflecting on the consequences, she neither encouraged me nor expressed disapprobation: her eyes fixed on her work, she endeavoured to appear unconscious of my presence at her feet; but all my stupidity could not hinder me from concluding that she partook of my embarrassment, perhaps my transports, and was only restrained by a bashfulness like mine, without even that supposition giving me power to surmount it. Five or six years older than myself, every advance, according to my idea, should have been made by her; and, since she did nothing to embolden me, I concluded that audacity would offend her. Even at this time I am inclined to believe I thought

right; she certainly had wit enough to perceive that a novice like me had occasion, not only for encouragement, but instruction.

I am ignorant how this animated, though dumb, scene would have ended, or how long I should have continued immoveable in this ridiculous, though delicious, situation, had we not been interrupted. In the height of my agitation I heard the opening of the kitchen door, which joined Madame Basile's chamber, when she, being alarmed, said, with a quick voice and action, 'Get up! here's Rosina!' Rising hastily, I seized one of her hands, which she held out to me, and gave it two eager kisses; at the second I felt this charming hand press gently on my lips. Never in my life did I enjoy so sweet a moment; but the occasion I had lost returned no more, this being the conclusion of our youthful amours.

Such may be the reason that the image of this amiable woman yet remains imprinted on my heart in such charming colours, which have even acquired fresh lustre since I became acquainted with the world and the sex. Had she been mistress of the least degree of experience, she would have taken other measures to animate so youthful a lover; but, if her heart was weak, it was virtuous, and only suffered itself to be borne away by a powerful though involuntary inclination. This was, apparently, her first infidelity, and I should perhaps have found more difficulty in vanquishing her scruples than my own: but, without proceeding so far, I experienced in her company the most inexpressible delights. Never did I taste with any other woman pleasures equal to those few minutes which I passed at the feet of Madame Basile without even daring to touch her gown. I am convinced no satisfaction can be compared to that we feel with a virtuous woman we esteem; all is transport! A sign with the finger, a hand lightly pressed against my lips,

were the only favours I ever received from Madame Basile, yet the bare remembrance of these trifling condescensions continues to transport me.

It was in vain I watched the two following days for another *tête-à-tête*. It was impossible to find an opportunity, nor could I perceive on her part any desire to forward it; her behaviour was not colder, but more distant than usual, and I believe she avoided my looks, for fear of not being able sufficiently to govern her own. The cursed clerk was more vexatious than ever; he even became a wit and satirist, telling me, with a sneer, that I should unquestionably make my way among the ladies. I trembled lest I should have been guilty of some indiscretion; and looking on myself as already engaged in an intrigue, endeavoured to cover with an air of mystery an inclination which hitherto certainly had no great need of it. This made me more circumspect in my choice of opportunities, and by resolving to seize such as should be free from danger, I met with none.

Another romantic folly, which I could never overcome, and which, joined to my natural timidity, tended directly to contradict the clerk's predictions, is that I always loved too sincerely — too perfectly, I may say — to find happiness easily attainable. Never were passions at the same time more lively and pure than mine; never was love more tender, more true, or more disinterested; freely would I have sacrificed my own happiness to that of the object of my affection; her reputation was dearer than my life, and no prospect of enjoyment could have tempted me to compromise her peace of mind for a moment. This disposition has ever made me employ so much care, so many precautions, such secrecy in my love-adventures, that all of them have failed — in a word, my want of success with women has ever proceeded from having loved them too well.

To return to our Egisthus the fluter: — It was remarkable that in becoming more insupportable the traitor put on the appearance of complaisance. From the first day that his mistress had taken me under her protection, she had endeavoured to make me serviceable in the warehouse; and, finding I understood arithmetic tolerably well, she proposed his teaching me to keep the books, a proposition that was but indifferently received by this humourist, who might, perhaps, be fearful of being supplanted. As this failed, my whole employ, besides what engraving I had to do, was to transcribe some bills and accounts, to make clean copies of sundry books, and translate commercial letters from Italian into French. All at once he thought fit to accept the before-rejected proposal, saying he would teach me book-keeping by double entry, and put me in a situation to offer my services to Monsieur Basile on his return; but there was something false, malicious, and ironical in his air and manner, that was by no means calculated to inspire me with confidence. Madame Basile replied archly that I was much obliged to him for his kind offer, but she hoped fortune would be more favourable to my merits; for it would be a great misfortune, with so much talent, that I should only become clerk.

She often said she would procure me some acquaintance that might be useful; she doubtless felt the necessity of parting with me, and had prudently resolved on it. Our mute declaration had been made on a Thursday; the Sunday following she gave a dinner. A Jacobin of good appearance was among the guests, to whom she did me the honour to present me. The monk treated me very affectionately, congratulated me on my late conversion, mentioned several particulars of my story, which plainly showed he had been made acquainted with it; then, tapping me familiarly on the cheek, bade me be

good, to keep up my spirits, and come to see him at his convent, where he should have more opportunity to talk with me. I judged him to be a person of some consequence by the deference that was paid him; and by the paternal tone he assumed with Madame Basile, to be her confessor. I likewise remember that his decent familiarity was attended with an appearance of esteem, and even respect for his fair penitent, which then made less impression on me than at present. Had I possessed more experience, how should I have congratulated myself on having touched the heart of a young woman respected by her confessor!

The table not being large enough to accommodate all the company, a small one was prepared, where I had the satisfaction of dining with our agreeable clerk; but I lost nothing with regard to attention and good cheer, for several plates were sent to the side-table which were certainly not intended for him. Thus far all went well: the ladies were in good spirits, and the gentlemen were very gallant, while Madame Basile did the honours of the table with peculiar grace. In the midst of the dinner we heard a chaise stop at the door, and presently some one coming upstairs — it was Monsieur Basile. Methinks I now see him entering, in his scarlet coat with gold buttons; from that day I have held the colour in abhorrence. Monsieur Basile was a tall, handsome man, of good address. He entered with a consequential look and an air of taking his family unawares, though none but friends were present. His wife ran to meet him, threw her arms about his neck, and gave him a thousand caresses, which he received with indifference; and without making any return, saluted the company and took his place at table. They were just beginning to speak of his journey, when, casting his eye on the small table, he asked in a sharp tone what lad that was. Madame

Basile told him ingenuously. He then inquired whether I lodged in the house, and was answered in the negative. 'Why not?' replied he rudely; 'since he stays here all day, he might as well remain all night too.' The monk now interfered, with a serious and true eulogium on Madame Basile. In a few words he made mine also, adding that, so far from blaming, he ought to further the pious charity of his wife, since it was evident she had not passed the bounds of discretion. The husband answered with an air of petulance, which, restrained by the presence of the monk, he endeavoured to stifle; it was, however, sufficient to let me understand he had already received information of me, and that our worthy clerk had rendered me an ill office.

We had hardly risen from table, when the latter came in triumph from his employer to inform me I must leave the house that instant, and never more during my life dare to set foot there. He took care to aggravate this commission by everything that could render it cruel and insulting. I departed without a word, my heart overwhelmed with sorrow, less for being obliged to quit this amiable woman than at the thought of leaving her to the brutality of her husband. He was certainly right to wish her faithful; but though prudent and well-born, she was an Italian — that is to say, tender and vindictive, which made me think he was extremely imprudent in using means the most likely in the world to draw on himself the very evil he dreaded.

Such was the success of my first adventure. I walked several times up and down the street, wishing to get a sight of her whom my heart incessantly regretted; but I could only discover her husband, or the vigilant clerk, who, perceiving me, made a sign with the measuring-wand which they used in the shop, more expressive than alluring. Finding, therefore, that I was so completely

watched, my courage failed, and I went no more. I wished, at least, to find out the patron she had provided me, but unfortunately I did not know his name. Several times I strolled round the convent, endeavouring in vain to meet with him. At length other events banished the delightful remembrance of Madame Basile; and in a short time I so far forgot her that I remained as simple, as much a novice, as ever, nor did my fancy for pretty women even receive any sensible augmentation.

Her liberality had, however, increased my little wardrobe, though she had done this with precaution and prudence, regarding neatness more than decoration, and to make me comfortable rather than elegant. The coat I had brought from Geneva was yet wearable; she only added a hat and some linen. I had no ruffles, nor would she give me any, though I greatly desired them. She was satisfied with having put it in my power to keep myself decently clothed, though a charge to do this was unnecessary while I was to appear before her.

A few days after this catastrophe, my hostess, who, as I have already said, was very friendly, with great satisfaction informed me she had heard of a situation, and that a lady of quality desired to see me. I immediately thought myself on the road to great adventures, that being the point to which all my ideas tended; this, however, did not prove so brilliant as I had conceived it. I waited on the lady with the servant who had mentioned me. She asked a number of questions, and, my answers not displeasing her, I immediately entered into her service, not indeed in the quality of a favourite, but as a footman. I was clothed like the rest of her people, the only difference being, they wore a shoulder-knot, which I had not; and as there was no lace on her livery, it appeared merely a tradesman's suit. This was the unforeseen conclusion of all my great expectancies.

The Comtesse de Vercellis, in whose household I now lived, was a widow without children. Her husband was a Piedmontese, but I always believed her to be a Savoyard, as I could have no conception that a native of Piedmont could speak such good French, and with so pure an accent. She was a middle-aged woman, of a noble appearance and cultivated understanding, being fond of French literature, in which she was well versed. She corresponded much, and always in French. Her letters had the expression and almost the elegance of Madame de Sévigné's; some of them might have been taken for hers. My principal employ, which was by no means displeasing to me, was to write from her dictation, a cancer in the breast, from which she suffered extremely, not permitting her to write herself.

Madame de Vercillis not only possessed a good understanding, but a strong and elevated soul. I was with her during her last illness, and saw her suffer and die, without showing an instant of weakness, or the least effort of constraint; still retaining her feminine manners, without entertaining an idea that such fortitude gave her any claim to philosophy — a word which was not yet in fashion, nor comprehended by her in the sense it bears at present. This strength of disposition sometimes extended almost to harshness, ever appearing to feel as little for others as herself; and when she relieved the unfortunate, it was rather for the sake of acting rightly than from a principle of real commiseration. I frequently experienced the effect of this insensibility during the three months I remained with her. It would have been natural to have an esteem for a young man of some abilities, who was incessantly under her observation; that she should think, as she felt her dissolution approaching, that after her death he would have occasion for assistance and support; but whether she judged me unworthy of particular atten-

tion, or that those who narrowly watched all her motions gave her no opportunity to think of any but themselves, she did nothing for me.

I very well recollect that she showed some curiosity to know my story, frequently questioning me, and appearing pleased when I showed her the letters I wrote to Madame de Warens, or explained my sentiments; but as she never discovered her own, she certainly did not take the right means to come at them. My heart, naturally communicative, loved to display its feelings whenever I encountered a similar disposition; but dry, cold interrogatories, without any sign of blame or approbation for my answers, gave me no confidence. Not being able to determine whether my discourse was agreeable or displeasing, I was ever in fear, and thought less of expressing my ideas than of being careful not to say anything that might seem to my disadvantage. I have since remarked that this dry method of questioning themselves into people's characters is a common trick among women who pride themselves upon superior understanding. These imagine that by concealing their own sentiments they shall the more easily penetrate into yours, being ignorant that this method destroys the confidence so necessary to make us reveal them. A man, on being questioned, is immediately on his guard; and if he once supposes that, without any interest in his concerns, you only wish to set him a-talking, either he entertains you with lies, is silent, or, examining every word before he utters it, rather chooses to pass for a fool than to be the dupe of your curiosity. In short, it is ever a bad method to attempt to read the hearts of others by endeavouring to conceal our own.

Madame de Vercellis never addressed a word to me which seemed to express affection, pity, or benevolence. She questioned me coldly; I answered with reserve. My answers were so timid that she must have found them

mean, and grew tired of them. Towards the last she questioned me no more, and talked of nothing but her service. She drew her judgment less from what I really was than from what she had made me, and by considering me as a footman prevented my appearing otherwise.

I am inclined to think I suffered at that time from the same interested game of concealed manœuvre which has crossed me throughout my life, and given me a very natural aversion for the apparent order of things which produces it. Madame de Vercellis having no children, her nephew, the Comte de la Roque, was her heir, and paid his court assiduously, as did her principal domestics, who, seeing her end approaching, endeavoured to take care of themselves; in short, so many were busy about her that she could hardly have found time to think of me. At the head of her household was a Monsieur Lorenzi, an artful fellow, with a still more artful wife, who had so far insinuated herself into the good graces of her mistress that she was rather on the footing of a friend than a servant. She had introduced a niece of hers as lady's-maid; her name was Mademoiselle Pontal, a sly damsel, that gave herself the airs of a waiting gentlewoman, and assisted her aunt so well in besetting the Comtesse, that she only saw with their eyes and acted through their hands. I had not the happiness to please this worthy triumvirate. I obeyed, but did not wait on them, not conceiving that my duty to our general mistress required me to be a servant to her servants. Besides this, I was a person who gave them some inquietude. They saw I was not in my proper situation, and feared the Comtesse would discover it likewise, and by placing me in it decrease their portions; for such sort of people, too greedy to be just, look on every legacy given to others as a diminution of their own wealth; they endeavoured, therefore, to keep me as much out of her sight as possible. She loved

to compose letters, which was a kind of diversion in her situation, but they contrived to give her a distaste for it, persuading her, by the aid of the doctor, that it was too fatiguing; and, under pretence that I did not understand how to wait on her, they employed two great clumsy chairmen for that purpose. In a word, they managed the affair so well that for eight days before she made her will I had not been permitted to enter the chamber. Afterwards I went in as usual, and was even more assiduous than any one, being afflicted at the sufferings of this unhappy lady, whom I truly respected and loved for the constancy with which she bore her illness; and often did I shed tears of real sorrow without being perceived by any one.

At length we lost her — I saw her expire. She had lived like a woman of sense and virtue, her death was that of a philosopher. I can truly say she rendered the Catholic religion amiable to me by the serenity with which she fulfilled its dictates, without any mixture of negligence or affectation. She was naturally serious, but towards the end of her illness she possessed a kind of gaiety, too regular to be assumed; it was but a counterpoise given by reason itself against the sadness of her situation. She only kept her bed two days, continuing to discourse cheerfully with those about her to the very last. At length, having ceased to speak, and already combating the agonies of death, she broke wind loudly. 'Good,' said she, and turned in her bed; 'she who breaks wind is not dead.' These were the last words she pronounced.

She had bequeathed a year's wages to all the underservants, but, not being on the household list, I had nothing. The Comte de la Roque, however, ordered them to give me thirty livres and the new coat I had on, which Monsieur Lorenzi would have taken from me. He even promised to procure me a place, giving me permission to

wait on him. Accordingly I went two or three times, without being able to speak to him, and as I was easily repulsed returned no more; that I was wrong will be seen hereafter.

Would I had finished what I have to say of my stay at Madame de Vercellis'! Though my situation apparently remained the same, I did not leave her house as I had entered it. I carried away with me the long remembrance of a crime; an insupportable weight of remorse which yet hangs on my conscience, though forty years have passed, and whose bitter recollection, far from weakening, gathers strength as I grow old. Who would believe that a childish fault should be productive of such melancholy consequences? But it is for the more than probable effects that my heart cannot be consoled. I have, perhaps, caused an amiable, honest, estimable girl, who was assuredly much better than I, to perish with shame and misery.

Though it is very difficult to break up housekeeping without confusion, and the loss of some property, yet such were the fidelity of the domestics, and the vigilance of Monsieur and Madame Lorenzi, that no article of the inventory was found wanting; in short, nothing was missing but a pink and silver ribbon, which belonged to Mademoiselle Pontal. Though several things of more value were within my reach, this ribbon alone tempted me, and I stole it. As I took no great pains to conceal the bauble, it was soon discovered; they immediately insisted on knowing from whence I had taken it. This perplexed me. I hesitated; and at length said, with confusion, that Marion had given it me. Marion was a young Mauriennese, and had been cook to Madame de Vercellis ever since the latter had left off entertaining company; for, being sensible that she had more need of good broths than fine ragoûts, she had discharged her former one. Marion

was not only pretty, but had that freshness of colour only to be found among the mountains, and, above all, an air of modesty and sweetness which made it impossible to see her without affection. She was besides a good girl, virtuous, and of such strict fidelity that every one was surprised at hearing her named. They had hardly less confidence in me, and judged it necessary to verify which of us was the thief. Marion was sent for; a great number of people were present, among whom was the Comte de la Roque. She arrives; they show her the ribbon; I accuse her boldly; she remains confused and speechless, casting a look on me that would have disarmed a demon, but which my barbarous heart resisted. At length she denied it with firmness, but without anger, exhorting me to recollect myself, and not injure an innocent girl who had never wronged me. With infernal impudence I confirmed my accusation, and to her face maintained she had given me the ribbon: on which the poor girl, bursting into tears, said these words: 'Ah, Rousseau! I thought you of a good disposition. You render me very unhappy, but I would not be in your situation.' That was all. She continued to defend herself with as much simplicity as firmness, but without uttering the least invective against me. Her moderation, compared to my positive tone, did her an injury; as it did not appear natural to suppose on one side such diabolical assurance, on the other such angelic mildness. The affair could not be absolutely decided, but the presumption was in my favour; they would not take further trouble in unravelling the matter; and the Comte de la Roque, in sending us both away, contented himself with saying 'the conscience of the guilty would avenge the innocent.' His prediction was true, and is being daily verified.

I am ignorant of what became of the victim of my calumny, but there is little probability of her having

been able to place herself agreeably after this, as she laboured under an imputation cruel to her character in every respect. The theft was a trifle, yet it was a theft, and, what was worse, employed to seduce a boy; while falsehood and obstinacy left nothing to hope from a person in whom so many vices were united. I do not even look on the misery and disgrace in which I plunged her as the greatest evil: who knows, at her age, whither contempt and abandonment might have led her? Alas! if remorse for having made her unhappy is insupportable, what must I have suffered at the thought of rendering her even worse than myself?

The cruel remembrance of this transaction sometimes so troubles and disorders me that, in my disturbed slumbers, I imagine I see this poor girl enter and reproach me with my crime, as though I had committed it but yesterday. While in easy and tranquil circumstances, I was less miserable on this account, but, during a troubled, agitated life, it has robbed me of the sweet consolation of persecuted innocence, and made me wofully experience what, I think, I have remarked in one of my works, that remorse sleeps in the sunshine of prosperity, but wakes amid the storms of adversity. I could never take on me to discharge my heart of this weight in the bosom of a friend, nor could the closest intimacy ever encourage me to it, even with Madame de Warens: all I could do was to own I had to accuse myself of an atrocious crime, but never said in what it consisted. The weight, therefore, has remained heavy on my conscience to this day; and I can truly own that the desire of relieving myself in some measure from it contributed greatly to the resolution of writing my Confessions.

I have proceeded candidly in that I have just made, and it will certainly not be thought that I have sought to palliate the turpitude of my offence; but I should not

fulfil the purpose of this undertaking did I not, at the same time, divulge my inward disposition, and excuse myself as far as is conformable with truth. Never was wickedness farther from my thoughts than in that cruel moment; and when I accused the unhappy girl, it is strange, but it is true, that my friendship for her was the cause of it. She was present to my thoughts; I formed my excuse from the first object that presented itself. I accused her of doing what I meant to have done, and, as I designed to have given her the ribbon, asserted she had given it to me. When she appeared my heart was agonised, but the presence of so many people was more powerful than my compunction. I did not greatly fear punishment, but I dreaded shame: I dreaded it more than death, more than the crime, more than all the world. I would have buried, stifled myself in the centre of the earth: invincible shame bore down every other sentiment; shame alone caused all my impudence, and the more I became criminal, the more the terror of acknowledging it rendered me intrepid. I felt no dread but that of being detected, of being publicly, and to my face, declared a thief, liar, and calumniator; an all-pervading fear of this overcame every other sensation. Had I been left to myself, I should infallibly have declared the truth. Or if Monsieur de la Roque had taken me aside, and said, 'Do not injure this poor girl; if you are guilty, own it,' I am convinced I should instantly have thrown myself at his feet; but they intimidated, instead of encouraging me. It is also just to make some allowance for age. I was hardly out of my childhood, or rather was yet in it. In youth, dark, premeditated villainy is more criminal than in a riper age, but weaknesses are much less so; my fault was truly nothing more. For this reason its remembrance afflicts me much less on account of the mischief itself than for that which it must have

caused. It had one good effect, however, in preserving me through the rest of my life from any action tending to crime, by the terrible impression that has remained from the only one I ever committed; and I think my aversion to lies proceeds in a great measure from regret at having been guilty of so black a one. If it is a crime that can be expiated, as I dare believe, forty years of uprightness and honour on various difficult occasions, with the many misfortunes that have overwhelmed my latter years, may have served the purpose. Poor Marion has so many avengers in this world, that however great my offence towards her, I do not fear to bear the guilt with me. This is all I have to say upon this article. May I be permitted never to mention it again.

BOOK III

[1728–1731]

LEAVING the service of Madame de Vercellis nearly as I had entered it, I returned to my former hostess, and remained there five or six weeks; during which time health, youth, and laziness frequently rendered my temperament importunate. I was restless, absent-minded, and thoughtful. I wept and sighed for a happiness of which I had no idea, though at the same time sensible of a privation. This situation is indescribable. Few men can even form any conception of it, because, in general, they have anticipated that plenitude of life, at once tormenting and delicious, which, in the intoxication of desire, gives a foretaste of enjoyment. My excited brain was incessantly occupied with girls and women, but in a manner peculiar to myself. These ideas kept my senses in a perpetual and disagreeable activity, though fortunately they did not point out the means of deliverance. I would have given my life to have met with a Mademoiselle Goton; but the time was past in which the play of infancy predominated; increase of years had introduced shame, the inseparable companion of a conscious deviation from rectitude, which so confirmed my natural timidity as to render it invincible; and never, either at that time or since, could I prevail on myself to offer an amorous proposition (unless in a manner constrained to it by previous advances), even with those whose scruples I had no cause to dread.

My uneasiness grew to such a pitch that, unable to

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find satisfaction, I humoured my longings by extravagant devices. I sought out shaded walks and hidden corners, where I might show myself to persons of the other sex in the attitude I should have liked to adopt in their presence. There was no obscenity in this, but much that was ridiculous. The silly pleasure that I derived from this proceeding is indescribable. There was but a step between my action and the reception of the treatment I wished for, and I doubt not that some passing girl, more resolute than the rest, might have paused and obliged me, had I had the audacity to wait. This folly met with a catastrophe almost as comical, but less pleasing to me.

One day I took up my post at the further end of a courtyard in which was a well, whither the maidservants often resorted to fetch water. At the extremity of the yard was a descent leading by several passages to cellars. I examined as best I could in the gloom these underground ways, and, finding them long and dark, presumed them be interminable, and that, if I were surprised, I should there find a sure refuge. Confident of this, I offered to the eyes of the girls who came to draw water a spectacle more ludicrous than seductive. The more prudent pretended not to see me; others began to laugh; others felt insulted, and raised a clamour. I betook myself to my retreat; I was followed. I heard the voice of a man; on this I had not reckoned, and I became alarmed. At the risk of losing myself I ran down the passages; the noise, the loud cries, especially the man's, still pursued me. I had counted on the security of darkness; I beheld a light. This made me shudder, and I rushed onward till stopped by a wall, where I was forced to await my fate. The next moment there came and seized me a great fellow with a great moustache, a great hat, and a great sabre, escorted by four or five old women armed with broomsticks, and among the rest I perceived the artful little

wench who had detected me, and who was no doubt longing to see my face.

The man with the sabre, taking hold of my arm, rudely asked me what I was doing there. It may be supposed that I was unprovided with a reply; nevertheless, I recovered my presence of mind, and racking my brain in this critical moment, I hit on a wild expedient that served the purpose. In a suppliant tone I asked him to pity my age and condition, saying that I was a young foreigner of noble birth, whose wits were deranged; that I had escaped from home because they were about to put me under restraint; that I would be ruined if he published the matter, but that if he would let me depart I might be able to show my gratitude to him at a future time. Most unexpectedly, my words and manner wrought their effect; terrible as he seemed, he relented, and after a brief reprimand, suffered me to go away quietly without further question. I judged by the countenances of the women when I was departing that the presence of the man had been of great service to me, and that had I had to deal with them alone I should not have got off so cheaply. I heard them muttering something — I knew not what and cared less; for, if the sword and its bearer were not brought into play, I felt assured, young and vigorous as I was, of a ready deliverance from them and their cudgels.

A few days after, walking through a street with a young abbé, a neighbour of mine, I was suddenly confronted by the man with the sabre. He recognised me, and mimicking me in a sneering way, 'I am a prince,' he said, 'I am a prince; and as for me I am a poltroon; but let his highness beware of coming back.' He ceased, and I slipped by with downcast look and inwardly thanking him for his discretion. Doubtless those accursed old women had made him ashamed of his credulity. Be this

as it may, Piedmontese though he was, he was a good fellow, and never do I think of him without a touch of gratitude; for the adventure was so droll that, were it only to raise a laugh, any other but he would have proclaimed my disgrace. This affair, though not followed by the ill consequences I might well have feared, nevertheless taught me prudence for a long time after.

My stay at Madame de Vercellis' had procured me some acquaintance which I thought might be serviceable to me, and therefore wished to retain. Among others I sometimes visited a Savoyard abbé, Monsieur Gaime, who was tutor to the Comte de Mellarède's children. He was young, and not much known, but possessed an excellent cultivated understanding, with great probity, and was altogether one of the best men I ever knew. He was incapable of doing me the service I then stood in most need of, not having sufficient interest to procure me a situation; but from him I reaped advantages far more precious, which have been useful to me through life, lessons of pure morality, and maxims of sound judgment. In the successive order of my inclinations and ideas, I had ever been too high or too low — Achilles or Thersites; sometimes a hero, at others a rascal. Monsieur Gaime took pains to make me properly acquainted with myself, without either sparing or giving me too much discouragement. He spoke in advantageous terms of my disposition and talents, adding that he foresaw obstacles which would prevent my profiting by them; thus, according to him, they were to serve less as steps by which I should mount to fortune than as resources which might enable me to exist without one. He gave me a true picture of human life, of which hitherto I had formed but a very erroneous idea, teaching me that a man of understanding, though destined to experience adverse fortune, might by skilful management arrive at happiness; that

there was no true felicity without virtue, which was practicable in every situation. He greatly diminished my admiration of human grandeur by proving that those in a superior situation are neither better nor happier than those they command. One of his maxims has frequently returned to my memory: it was, that if we could truly read the hearts of others we should feel more inclination to descend than rise. This reflection, the truth of which is striking without extravagance, I have found of great utility in the various exigencies of my life, as it tended to make me satisfied with my condition. He gave me the first just conception of relative duties, which my high-flown imagination had ever pictured in extremes, making me sensible that the enthusiasm of sublime virtues is of little use in society; that while endeavouring to rise too high we are in danger of falling; and that a virtuous and uniform discharge of little duties requires as great a degree of fortitude as actions which are called heroic, and would at the same time procure more honour and happiness; that it was infinitely more desirable to possess the lasting esteem of those about us than to excite their admiration.

In properly arranging the various duties between man and man, it was necessary to ascend to principles. The step, too, which I had recently taken, and of which my present situation was the consequence, naturally led us to speak of religion. It will easily be conceived that the honest Monsieur Gaime was, in a great measure, the original of the Savoyard Vicar; prudence only obliging him to deliver his sentiments, on certain points, with more caution and reserve, and explain himself with less freedom; but his sentiments and counsels were the same, not even excepting his advice to return to my country; all was precisely as I have since given it to the public. Dwelling no longer, therefore, on conversations of which

every one may tell the substance, I shall only add that these wise instructions (though they did not produce an immediate effect) were as so many seeds of virtue and religion in my heart which were never rooted out, and only required the fostering care of close friendship to bring to maturity.

Though my conversion was not very sincere, I was affected by his discourses, and, far from being weary, was pleased with them on account of their clearness and simplicity, but above all because his heart seemed interested in what he said. My disposition is naturally tender; I have ever been less attached to people for the good they have really done me than for that they designed to do, and my feelings in this particular have seldom misled me: thus I truly esteemed Monsieur Gaime. I was in a manner his second disciple, which even at that time was of inestimable service in turning me from a propensity to vice into which my idleness was leading me.

One day, when I least expected it, I was sent for by the Comte de la Roque. Having frequently called at his house without being able to speak with him, I grew weary, and, supposing he had either forgotten me or retained some unfavourable impression of me, returned no more; but I was mistaken. He had more than once witnessed the pleasure I took in fulfilling my duty to his aunt: he had even mentioned it to her, and afterwards spoke of it, when I no longer thought of it myself. He received me graciously, saying that instead of amusing me with useless promises he had sought to place me to advantage; that he had succeeded, and would put me in a way to better my situation, but the rest must depend on myself; that, the family into which he should introduce me being both powerful and esteemed, I should need no other patrons; and though at first, as heretofore, on the footing of a servant, I might be assured that, if my conduct

and sentiments were found above that station, I should not long remain in it. The end of this discourse cruelly disappointed the brilliant hopes the beginning had inspired. 'What! for ever a footman?' said I to myself, with a bitterness which confidence presently effaced, for I felt myself too superior to that situation to fear long remaining there.

He took me to the Comte de Gouvon, Master of the Horse to the Queen, and chief of the illustrious House of Solar. The air of dignity conspicuous in this respectable old man rendered the affability with which he received me yet more touching. He questioned me with evident interest, and I replied with sincerity. He then told the Comte de la Roque that my features were agreeable, and promised intellect, which he believed I was not deficient in; but that was not enough, and time must show the rest; after which, turning to me, he said, 'Child, almost all situations are attended with difficulties in the beginning; yours, however, shall not have too great a portion of them; be prudent, and endeavour to please every one, that will be almost your only employment; for the rest fear nothing, you shall be taken care of.' Immediately after he went to the Marquise de Breil, his daughter-in-law, to whom he presented me, and then to the Abbé de Gouvon, his son. I was elated with this beginning, as I knew enough of the world already to conclude that so much ceremony is not generally used at the reception of a footman. In fact, I was not treated like one. I dined at the steward's table; did not wear a livery; and the Comte de Favria, a giddy youth, having commanded me to get behind his coach, his grandfather ordered that I should get behind no coach, nor follow any one out of the house. Meantime, I waited at table, and did, within-doors, the business of a footman; but I did it, as it were, of my own free will, without being ap-

pointed to any particular service; and except writing some letters which were dictated to me, and cutting out some pictures for the Comte de Favria, I was almost the absolute master of my time. This trial of my discretion, which I did not then perceive, was certainly very dangerous, and not very humane; for in this state of idleness I might have contracted vices which I should not otherwise have given way to.

Fortunately, it did not produce that effect; my memory retained the lessons of Monsieur Gaime; they had made an impression on my heart, so much so that I sometimes escaped from the house of my patron to obtain a repetition of them. I believe those who saw me going out, apparently by stealth, had no conception of my business. Nothing could be more prudent than the advice he gave me, respecting my conduct. My beginning was admirable; so much attention, assiduity, and zeal had charmed every one. The Abbé Gaime advised me to moderate this first ardour, lest I should relax, and that relaxation should be noted. 'Your setting out,' said he, 'is the rule of what will be expected of you; endeavour gradually to increase your attentions, but be cautious how you diminish them.'

As they paid but little attention to my trifling talents, and supposed I possessed no more than nature had given me, there was no appearance, notwithstanding the Comte de Gouvon's promises, of my meeting with any particular consideration. Some objects of more consequence intervened, and I was almost forgotten. The Marquis de Breil, son of the Comte de Gouvon, was then ambassador at Vienna; circumstances had occurred at that court which for some weeks kept the family in continual agitation, and left them no time to think of me. Meantime I had relaxed but little in my attentions, though one object in the family did me both good and harm, making me more

secure from exterior dissipation, but less attentive to my duties.

Mademoiselle de Breil was about my own age, tolerably handsome, and very fair-complexioned, with black hair, which notwithstanding gave to her features that air of softness so natural to the flaxen, and which my heart could never resist. The court dress, so becoming to youth, showed her fine figure, her bosom and shoulders, to advantage, and the mourning which the family then wore seemed to add to her beauty. It will be said that a domestic should not take notice of these things. I was certainly to blame, yet I perceived all this, nor was I the only one; the maître d'hôtel and valets de chambre spoke of her sometimes at table with a vulgarity that pained me extremely. My head, however, was not sufficiently turned to allow of my being entirely in love; I did not forget myself or my situation. I loved to see Mademoiselle de Breil; to hear her say anything that marked wit, sense, or good-humour; my ambition, confined to a desire of waiting on her, never exceeded its just rights. At table I was ever attentive to make the most of them; if her footman quitted her chair, I instantly supplied his place: in default of this, I stood facing her, seeking in her eyes what she was about to ask for, and watching the moment to change her plate. What would I not have given to hear her command, to have her look at, or speak the smallest word to me? But no, I had the mortification to be beneath her regard: she did not even perceive I was there. Her brother, nevertheless, who frequently spoke to me while at table, having one day said something which I did not consider obliging, I made him so arch and well-turned an answer that it drew her attention; she cast her eyes upon me, and this glance was sufficient to fill me with transport. The next day a second occasion presented itself, which I fortunately

made use of. A great dinner was given; and I saw, with astonishment, for the first time, the maître d'hôtel waiting at table, with a sword by his side, and wearing his hat. By chance, the discourse turned on the motto of the House of Solar, which, with the arms, was worked in the tapestry, 'Tel fiert qui ne tue pas.' As the Piedmontese are not in general very perfect in the French language, some one found fault with the orthography, saying that in the word *fiert* there should be no *t*.

The old Comte de Gouvon was going to reply, when, happening to cast his eyes on me, he perceived I smiled without daring to say anything; he ordered me to speak my opinion. I then said that I did not think the *t* superfluous, *fiert* being an old French word, not derived from *ferus*, proud, threatening, but from the verb *ferit*, he strikes, he wounds; the motto, therefore, did not appear to mean 'Such a one threatens,' but 'Such a one strikes, who does not kill.'

The whole company fixed their eyes on me, then on each other, without speaking a word; never was a greater degree of astonishment; but what flattered me above all was an air of satisfaction which I perceived on the countenance of Mademoiselle de Breil. This scornful lady deigned to cast on me a second look at least as valuable as the former, and, turning to her grandfather, appeared to wait with impatience for the praise that was due to me, and which he fully bestowed, with such apparent satisfaction that it was eagerly chorussed by the whole table. This interval was short, but delightful in many respects; it was one of those moments so rarely met with, which replace things in their natural order, and revenge depressed merit for the injuries of fortune. Some minutes after, Mademoiselle de Breil again raised her eyes, desiring me with a voice of timid affability to give her some drink. It will be easily supposed I did not let

her wait, but, advancing towards her, I was seized with such a trembling that, having filled the glass too full, I spilt some of the water on her plate, and even on herself. Her brother asked me inconsiderately why I trembled thus. This question increased my confusion, while the face of Mademoiselle de Breil was suffused with a crimson blush.

Here ended the romance, where it may be remarked (as with Madame Basile and others in the continuance of my life) that I was not fortunate in the conclusion of my amours. In vain I placed myself frequently in the antechamber of Madame de Breil; I could not obtain one mark of attention from her daughter. She went in and out without looking at me, nor had I the confidence to raise my eyes to her; I was even so foolishly stupid, that one day, when she dropped her glove in passing by, instead of seizing it and covering it with kisses, as I would gladly have done, I did not dare to quit my place, but suffered it to be taken up by a great booby of a footman, whom I could willingly have knocked down. To complete my timidity, I perceived that I had not the good fortune to please Madame de Breil; she not only never ordered, but even rejected my services; and, having twice found me in her antechamber, asked me drily 'if I had nothing to do.' I was obliged, therefore, to renounce this dear antechamber. At first it caused me some sorrow, but, other matters intervening, I presently thought no more of it.

The disdain of Madame de Breil was compensated by the kindness of her father-in-law, who at length began to think of me. The evening after the entertainment I have already mentioned, he had a conversation with me that lasted half an hour, which appeared to satisfy him, and absolutely enchanted me. This good man, though not lacking in wit and sense, had less of these than Madame

de Vercellis, but possessed more feeling; I therefore succeeded much better with him. He bade me attach myself to his son, the Abbé de Gouvon, who had an esteem for me, which, if I took care to cultivate, might be serviceable in furnishing me with what was necessary to complete their views for my future establishment. The next morning I flew to Monsieur l'Abbé, who did not receive me as a servant, but made me sit by his fireside, and questioned me with great affability. He soon found that my education, which had attempted many things, had completed none: observing especially that I understood something of Latin, he undertook to teach me more, and appointed me to attend him every morning, commencing on the morrow. Thus, by one of the whimsicalities which have marked the whole course of my life, at once above and below my natural situation, I was pupil and footman in the same house; and, though in servitude, had a preceptor whose birth entitled him to supply that place only to the children of kings.

The Abbé de Gouvon was a younger son, designed by his family for a bishopric, for which reason his studies had been pursued further than is usual with people of quality. He had been sent to the University of Sienna, where he had resided some years, and whence he had brought a good portion of Cruscantism,[1] designing to be that at Turin which the Abbé de Dangeau was formerly at Paris. Being disgusted with theology, he gave himself up to belles-lettres, a circumstance very frequent in Italy with those who have entered the career of prelacy. He had studied the poets, and wrote tolerable Latin and Italian verses; in a word, his taste was calculated to form mine, and give some order to that chaos of crude notions with which my brain was encumbered; but whether my

[1] Extreme purity of language. *Cruscante* signifies one who rejects all words not adopted by the Accademia della Crusca.

parting had misled him, or that he could not support the trouble of teaching the elementary parts of Latin, he set me at first too high; and I had scarcely translated a few fables of Phædrus before he put me into Virgil, where I could hardly understand anything. It will be seen hereafter that I was destined frequently to learn Latin, but never to attain a right knowledge of it. I laboured with fair assiduity, and the Abbé bestowed his attention with a degree of kindness the remembrance of which, even at this time, affects me. I passed the greater part of the morning with him, as much for my own instruction as in his service; not that he ever permitted me to perform any menial office, but to copy or write from his dictation; and my post of secretary was more useful than that of scholar. By this means I not only learned Italian in its utmost purity, but also acquired a taste for literature and some discernment of the great writers, which I could not have obtained from La Tribu's stock, and which were useful to me when I afterwards wrote alone.

This was the period of my life when, without being romantic, I might most reasonably have indulged the hope of preferment. Monsieur l'Abbé, thoroughly pleased with me, expressed his satisfaction to every one, while his father had such a singular liking for me that I was assured by the Comte de Favria that he had spoken of me to the King; even Madame de Breil had laid aside her disdainful looks. In short, I was a general favourite, which gave great jealousy to the other servants, who, seeing me honoured by the instructions of their master's son, were persuaded I should not long remain their equal.

As far as I could judge by some words dropped at random, and which I reflected on afterwards, it appeared to me that the House of Solar, wishing to run the career of embassies, and hoping, perhaps, in time to arrive at the ministry, desired to provide themselves with a person of

merit and talents, who, depending entirely on them, might obtain their confidence, and be ultimately of essential service. This project of the Comte de Gouvon was judicious, magnanimous, and truly worthy of a powerful nobleman, equally provident and generous; but, besides my not seeing at that time its full extent, it was far too rational for my brain, and required too long a servitude. My ridiculous ambition sought for fortune achieved through adventures; and, not finding a woman in all this scheme, it appeared tedious, painful, and melancholy; though I ought rather to have thought it more honourable and certain on this account, the species of merit generally patronised by women being assuredly less worthy than that which I was supposed to possess.

Everything succeeded to my wish. I had obtained, almost forced, the esteem of all. The novitiate was over, and I was universally considered as a young man with flattering prospects, who was not at present in his proper sphere, but was expected soon to reach it; but my place was not assigned me by man, and I was to reach it by very different paths. I now come to one of those characteristic traits which are natural to me, and which it suffices to exhibit to the reader without this reflection.

Though there were at Turin several new converts of my own stamp, I neither liked nor wished to see them, but I had met with some Genevese who were not of this description, and among others a Monsieur Mussard, nicknamed Tord-gueule, a miniature painter, and a distant relation. This Monsieur Mussard, having learned my situation at the Comte de Gouvon's, came to see me, with another Genevese named Bâcle, who had been my comrade during my apprenticeship. This Bâcle was a very sprightly, amusing young fellow, full of lively sallies, which at his time of life appeared extremely agreeable. At once, then, behold me delighted with Monsieur Bâcle

— charmed to such a degree that I found it impossible to quit him. He was shortly to depart for Geneva — what a loss had I to sustain! I felt the whole force of it, and, resolving to make the best use of this precious interval, I determined not to leave him, or, rather, he never quitted me, for my head was not yet sufficiently turned to think of quitting the house without leave; but it was soon perceived that he engrossed my whole time, and he was accordingly forbidden the house. This so incensed me that, forgetting everything but my friend Bâcle, I went neither to the Abbé nor to the Comte, and was no longer to be found at home. I paid no attention to repeated reprimands, and at length was threatened with dismissal. This threat was my ruin, as it suggested the idea that it was not absolutely necessary that Bâcle should depart alone. From that moment I could think of no other pleasure, no other destiny, no other happiness than such a journey, one of ineffable felicity, at the end of which I beheld in fancy Madame de Warens, though at a vast distance; for as to returning to Geneva, it never entered into my imagination. The hills, fields, brooks, and villages incessantly succeeded each other, with new charms, and this delightful jaunt seemed worthy to absorb my whole existence. Memory recalled, with inexpressible pleasure, how charming the country had appeared in coming hither; what, then, must it be when to the pleasure of independence should be added the company of a good-humoured comrade of my own age and disposition, without any constraint or obligation, but free to go or stay as we pleased? Would it not be madness to sacrifice the prospect of so much felicity to projects of ambition, slow and difficult in their execution, and uncertain in their event, which, even supposing them realised, and in their utmost splendour, were not worth one quarter of an hour of the sweet pleasure and liberty of youth?

Full of these sage fantasies, I conducted myself in such wise that — not, indeed, without some trouble — I got myself dismissed; for, on my return one night, the maître-d'hôtel gave me warning on the part of Monsieur le Comte. This was exactly what I wanted; for feeling, in spite of myself, the extravagance of my conduct, I wished to excuse it by the addition of injustice and ingratitude, thinking thus to throw the blame on others, and sheltering myself under the plea of necessity. I was told the Comte de Favria wished to speak with me the next morning before my departure; but, being sensible that my head was so far turned as to render it impossible for me to disobey the injunction, the maître-d'hôtel declined paying the money designed me, and which certainly I had very ill earned, till after this visit; for, my patrons being unwilling to place me in the situation of a footman, I had not any fixed wages.

The Comte de Favria, though young and giddy, talked to me on this occasion in the most sensible and serious manner — I might add, if it would not be thought vain, with the utmost tenderness. He reminded me, in the most flattering and touching terms, of the cares of his uncle and intentions of his grandfather; and finally, after having drawn in lively colours what I was sacrificing to rush upon ruin, he offered to make my peace, without stipulating any conditions, but that I should no more see the worthless fellow who had seduced me.

It was so apparent that he did not say all this of himself that, notwithstanding my blind stupidity, I powerfully felt the kindness of my good old master; but the dear journey was too firmly printed on my imagination for any consideration to balance the charm. Bereft of understanding, firm to my purpose, I hardened myself against conviction, and arrogantly answered that, as they thought fit to give me warning, I had resolved to take it,

and conceived it was now too late to retract, since, whatever might happen to me, I was fully resolved not to be driven a second time from the same house. The young man, justly irritated, bestowed on me some names which I deserved, and, putting me out of his apartment by the shoulders, shut the door upon me. I departed triumphant, as if I had gained the greatest victory, and fearful of sustaining a second combat, even had the ingratitude to leave the house without thanking the Abbé for his kindness.

To form a just conception of my delirium at that moment, the excess to which my heart is subject to be heated by the most trifling incidents, and the ardour with which my imagination seizes on the object which attracts it, however illusory it may be, should be conceived. At these times plans the most ridiculous, childish, and void of sense flatter my favourite idea, and persuade me that it is reasonable wholly to give myself up to it. Would it be believed that when nearly nineteen any one could be so stupid as to build his hopes of future subsistence on an empty phial? Well, listen.

The Abbé de Gouvon had made me a present, some weeks before, of a very pretty heron fountain,[1] with which I was highly delighted. Playing with this toy, and speaking of our departure, the sage Bâcle and myself thought it might be of infinite advantage, and enable us to lengthen our journey. What in the world was so curious as a heron fountain? This idea was the foundation on which we built our future fortune; we were to assemble around our fountain the country-people in every village we might pass through, when feasting and good cheer would be sure to pour on us abundantly; for we were both firmly persuaded that provisions cost nothing to those who grew

[1] Properly *fontaine de Hiéron*, invented by Hieron of Alexandria and perfected by Nieuwentit.

and gathered them; and, if they did not feed travellers plentifully, it was through downright ill-nature. We pictured in all parts entertainments and weddings, reckoning that without any expense but wind from our lungs, and the water of our fountain, we should be maintained through Piedmont, Savoy, France, and, indeed, all the world over. There was no end to our projected travels, and we immediately directed our course northward, rather for the pleasure of crossing the Alps than from a supposed necessity of being obliged to stop at any place.

[1731–1732.] Such was the plan on which I set out, abandoning without regret my patron, my preceptor, my studies and hopes, with the almost certain attainment of a fortune, to lead the life of a real vagabond. Farewell to the capital; adieu to the court, ambition, love, the fair, and all the great adventures into which hope had led me during the preceding year! I departed with my fortune and my friend Bâcle, a purse lightly furnished, but a heart overflowing with joy, and only thinking how to enjoy the wandering felicity to which I had suddenly sacrificed my brightest projects.

This extravagant journey was performed almost as agreeably as I had expected, though not exactly on the same plan; not but our fountain highly amused the hostess and servants for some minutes at all the ale-houses where we halted, yet we found it equally necessary to pay on our departure; but that gave us no concern, as we never thought of depending on it entirely until our money should be expended. An accident spared us that trouble: our fountain was broken near Bramant, and in good time, for we both felt, though without daring to own it to each other, that we began to be weary of it. This misfortune rendered us gayer than ever; we laughed heartily at our heedlessness in having forgotten that our clothes and

shoes would wear out, or trusting to renew them by the play of our fountain. We continued our journey as merrily as we had begun it, only drawing faster towards that termination whither our drained purses made it necessary to arrive.

At Chambéri I became pensive; not for the folly I had committed, for never did any one think less anxiously of the past, but on account of the reception I should meet with from Madame de Warens; for I looked on her house as if it were my paternal home. I had written her an account of my reception at the Comte de Gouvon's; she knew my position there, and in congratulating me on my good fortune, had added some wise lessons on the return I ought to make for the kindness with which they treated me. She looked on my fortune as already made, if not destroyed by my own negligence. What then would she say on my arrival? It never entered my mind that she might shut the door against me; but I dreaded the uneasiness I might give her; I dreaded her reproaches, to me more wounding than want. I resolved to bear all in silence, and, if possible, to appease her. I now saw nothing but her in the whole universe, and to live in disgrace with her was impossible.

I was most concerned about my companion, whom I did not wish to involve in my own troubles, and feared I should not easily get rid of. I prefaced this separation by an affected coldness during the last day's journey. The fellow understood me perfectly; in fact, he was rather scatter-brained than deficient in point of sense. I expected he would have been hurt at my inconstancy, but I was quite mistaken; nothing affected my friend Bâcle, for hardly had we set foot in town, on our arrival in Annecy, before he said, 'You are now at home' — embraced — bade me adieu — turned on his heel, and disappeared; nor have I ever heard of him since. Our ac-

quaintance and friendship lasted altogether for some six weeks, but the consequences will last as long as I shall live.

How did my heart beat as I approached the habitation of Madame de Warens! My legs trembled under me, my eyes were clouded with a mist; I neither saw, heard, nor recollected any one, and was obliged frequently to stop that I might draw breath, and recall my bewildered senses. Was it fear of not obtaining that succour of which I stood in need that agitated me to this degree? At the age I had then attained, does the fear of perishing with hunger give such alarms? No; I declare with as much truth as pride that it was not in the power of interest or indigence, at any period of my life, to expand or contract my heart. In the course of an agitated life, memorable for its vicissitudes, frequently destitute of an asylum and without bread, I have contemplated with equal indifference both opulence and misery. In want I might have begged or stolen, as others have done, but never could feel distress at being reduced to such need. Few men have grieved so deeply as myself, few have shed so many tears: yet never did poverty, or the fear of falling into it, make me heave a sigh or moisten my eyelids. My soul, steeled against fortune, has only been sensible of real good and evil, which do not depend on her; and it is only when no earthly thing has been lacking to me that I have been the most miserable of mortals.

The first glance of Madame de Warens banished all my fears. My heart quivered at the sound of her voice; I threw myself at her feet, and, in transports of the most lively joy, pressed my lips upon her hand. I am ignorant whether she had received any recent information of me; I discovered but little surprise on her countenance, and no sorrow. 'Poor child!' said she, in an affectionate tone, 'art thou here again? I knew thou wert too young for

this journey; I am very glad, however, that it did not turn out so badly as I had feared.' She then made me recount my history; it was not long, and I did it faithfully, suppressing only some incidents, but on the whole neither sparing nor excusing myself.

The question was, where I could lodge. She consulted her maid on this point. I hardly dared to breathe during the deliberation; but when I heard I was to sleep in the house I could scarce contain my joy, and saw the little bundle I had brought with me carried into my destined apartment with much the same sensation as Saint-Preux saw his chaise put up at Madame de Wolmar's. To complete all, I had the satisfaction to find that this favour was not to be transitory; for, at a moment when they thought me attentive to something else, I heard Madame de Warens say, 'They may talk as they please, but, since Providence has sent him back, I am determined not to abandon him.'

Behold me, then, established at her house; not, however, that I date the happiest days of my life from this period, but this served to prepare me for them. Though that sensibility of heart which enables us truly to enjoy our being is the work of Nature, and perhaps a mere effect of organisation, yet it requires situations to unfold itself, and, without such a concurrence of favourable circumstances, a man born with fine sensibility may go out of the world without ever having been acquainted with himself. This was my case till that time, and such perhaps it might have remained had I never known Madame de Warens, or, even having known her, had I not remained with her long enough to contract that pleasing habit of affectionate sentiments with which she inspired me. I dare affirm that those who only love taste not the sweetest pleasure of life. I am acquainted with another sentiment less impetuous but a thousand times more delightful;

sometimes joined with love, but frequently separated from it. This feeling is not simply friendship, it is more voluptuous, more tender; nor do I imagine it can exist between persons of the same sex — at least I have been truly a friend, if ever man was, and yet never experienced it in that kind. This distinction is not sufficiently clear, but will become so hereafter: sentiments are only describable by their effects.

She inhabited an old house, but large enough to have a handsome spare apartment, which she made her drawing-room. I now occupied this chamber, which was above the passage I have before mentioned as the place of our first meeting. Beyond the brook and gardens was a prospect of the country, which was by no means uninteresting to the young inhabitant, being the first time, since my residence at Bossey, that I had seen verdure before my windows; always shut in by walls, I viewed nothing but roofs and dusty streets. How pleasing then was this novelty! it helped to increase the tenderness of my disposition; for I looked on this charming landscape as an added gift of my dear patroness, who I could almost fancy had placed it there on purpose for me. Peaceably seated, my fancy pursued her amidst the flowers and the verdure; her charms seemed to me confounded with those of spring; my heart, till now contracted, here found means to expand itself, and my sighs exhaled more freely in these bowers.

The magnificence I had been accustomed to at Turin was not to be found at Madame de Warens', but in lieu of it there was neatness, regularity, and a patriarchal abundance which is never attached to ostentation. She had very little plate, no porcelain, no game in her kitchen, or foreign wines in her cellar; but both were well furnished, and at every one's service; and her coffee, though served in earthenware cups, was excellent. Whoever

came was invited to dine with herself, or at any rate in the house, and never did labourer, messenger, or traveller depart without refreshment. Her family consisted of a pretty chambermaid from Fribourg, named Merceret; a valet from her own country called Claude Anet (of whom I shall speak hereafter), a cook, and two hired chairmen when she went to pay visits, which seldom happened. This was a great deal to be done out of two thousand livres a year; yet, with good management, it might have been sufficient in a country where land is extremely good, and money very scarce. Unfortunately, economy was never her favourite virtue; she contracted debts — paid them — thus her money passed from hand to hand like a weaver's shuttle, and quickly disappeared.

The arrangement of her housekeeping was exactly what I should have chosen, therefore I shared it with satisfaction. I was least pleased with the necessity of remaining long at table. Madame de Warens was much incommoded by the first smell of soup or meat, which brought on a tendency to faint; from this she slowly recovered, talking meantime, and never attempting to eat for the first half-hour. I could have dined thrice in the time, and had indeed finished my meal long before she began; I then ate again for company; and though by this means I usually dined twice, felt no inconvenience from it. In short, I was the more perfectly at my ease, inasmuch as my happiness was mingled with no anxiety for the future. Not being then acquainted with the state of her finances, I supposed her means were adequate to her expense; and, though I afterwards found the same abundance, yet when instructed in her real situation, finding her income ever anticipated, I could not enjoy it with the same tranquillity. Foresight with me has always embittered enjoyment; in vain I saw the approach of misfortunes, I was never the more likely to avoid them.

From the first moment of our meeting the sweetest familiarity was established between us, and in the same degree it continued during the rest of her life. 'Child' was my name, 'Mamma' was hers, and Child and Mamma we have ever continued, even after years had almost effaced the apparent difference of age between us. I think those names convey an exact idea of our behaviour, the simplicity of our manners, and, above all, the intercourse of our hearts. To me she was the tenderest of mothers, ever preferring my welfare to her own pleasure; and, if the gratification of the senses intermingled with my attachment to her, it was not to change its nature, but only to render it more exquisite, and infatuate me with the charm of having a mother young and handsome, whom I was delighted to caress; I say literally, to caress, for never did it enter into her imagination to deny me the tenderest maternal kisses and endearments, or into my heart to abuse them. It will be said, at length our intimacy was of a different kind: I confess it; but have patience, that will come in its turn.

The sudden sight of her, on our first interview, was the only truly passionate moment with which she ever inspired me, and even that was principally the work of surprise. My indiscreet glances never dared to peer through the openings of her kerchief, however strongly attracted thither by an ill-concealed fulness of her person. With her I had neither transports nor desires, but remained in a ravishing calm, sensible of a happiness I could not define, and thus could I have passed my whole life, or even eternity, without feeling an instant of weariness. She was the only person with whom I never experienced that want of conversation which to me is so painful to endure. Our *tête-à-têtes* were rather an inexhaustible chat than conversation, and could only conclude from interruption. So far from finding discourse difficult, I rather thought it

a hardship to be silent; unless, when contemplating her projects, she sank into a reverie, when I silently let her meditate, and, gazing on her, was the happiest of men. I had another singular fancy, which was that, without pretending to the favours of a *tête-à-tête*, I was perpetually seeking occasions to be alone with her, enjoying such opportunities with rapture, which changed to anger when importunate visitors broke in upon us. No matter whether it was man or woman, I went out murmuring, not being able to remain a third party in her company; then, counting the minutes in her antechamber, I used to curse these eternal visitors, thinking it inconceivable how they could find so much to say, because I had still more.

I never felt the full force of my attachment for her save when I saw her not. Only when in her presence, was I content; when absent, my uneasiness reached almost to sadness, and a wish to live with her gave me emotions of tenderness even to tears. Never shall I forget one great holiday, while she was at vespers, when I took a walk out of the city, my heart full of her image, and the ardent longing to pass my life with her. I could easily enough see that at present this was impossible; that the happiness I enjoyed would be of short duration; and this idea gave to my contemplation a tincture of melancholy, which, however, was not gloomy, but tempered with a flattering hope. The ringing of church-bells, which ever affects me, the singing of birds, the fineness of the day, the beauty of the landscape, the scattered country-houses, among which in idea I placed our future dwelling, altogether struck me with an expression so lively, tender, melancholy, and powerful, that I saw myself in ecstasy transported into that happy time and abode, where my heart, possessing all the felicity it could desire, might taste it with raptures inexpressible; nor did a trace of sensu-

mingle with these dreams. I never recollect to have enjoyed the future with such force of illusion as at that time; and what has particularly struck me in the recollection of this reverie is that, when realised, I found my situation exactly as I had imagined it. If ever waking dream had an appearance of a prophetic vision, it was assuredly this: I was only deceived in its imaginary duration; for days, years, and life itself passed ideally in perfect tranquillity, while the reality lasted but a moment. Alas! my most durable happiness was but as a dream; its accomplishment was followed swiftly by a rude awakening.

I know not when I should end if I were to enter into a detail of all the follies that affection for this dear Mamma made me commit when not in her presence. How often have I kissed the bed on a supposition that she had slept there; the curtains and all the furniture of my chamber, in thinking they were hers, and that her charming hand had touched them; nay, the floor itself, when I considered she had walked there! Sometimes even in her presence extravagances escaped me, which only the most violent passion seemed capable of inspiring. One day at table, when she had put a morsel into her mouth, I cried out that I had seen a hair upon it: she cast it out again upon her plate; I took it up eagerly and swallowed it. In a word, there was but one difference, though an essential one, to distinguish me from an absolute lover, and that particular renders my situation almost inconceivable.

I had returned from Italy, not altogether as I went, but as, perhaps, never at my age any one came back. I brought back from thence, not my virginity, but my *pucelage*. I had felt the progress of years; my troublesome constitution at last declared itself; and its first eruption, extremely involuntary, gave me apprehensions for my health which paint better than anything else the

innocence in which I had lived till that time. But my fears being soon removed, I learned this dangerous supplement which diverts the course of nature, and saves young people of my humour many disorders at the expense of their health, their vigour, and sometimes their life. This vice, which shame and timidity find so convenient, has besides great enticements for lively imaginations; that is, to dispose in a manner at will of the whole sex, and to make the beauties which tempt them serve their pleasures without the necessity of obtaining their consent. Seduced by this fatal advantage, I laboured to destroy the sound constitution nature had given me, and to which I had given time to form itself thoroughly and soundly. My local situation should likewise be considered — living with a pretty woman, cherishing her image in the bottom of my heart, seeing her during the whole day, at night surrounded with objects that recalled her incessantly to my remembrance, and sleeping in the bed where I knew she had slept. What stimulants! Who can read this without supposing me on the brink of the grave! But quite the contrary; that which might have ruined me acted as a preservative, at least for a time. Intoxicated with the charm of living with her, with the ardent desire of passing my life there, absent or present I saw in her a tender mother, a beloved sister, a delightful friend, but nothing more; meantime, her image filled my heart, and left room for no other object. For me, she was the only woman in the world. The extreme tenderness with which she inspired me excluded every other woman from my consideration, and preserved me from the whole sex; in a word, I was virtuous, because I loved her. Let these particulars, which I recount but indifferently, be considered, and then let any one judge what kind of attachment I had for her; for my part, all I can say is, that if it hitherto appears extraordinary, it will appear much more so in the sequel.

My time passed in the most agreeable manner, though occupied in a way which was by no means calculated to please me; such as having projects to digest, bills to write fair, receipts to transcribe, herbs to pick, drugs to compound, or distillations to attend; and in the midst of all this came crowds of travellers, beggars, and visitors of all denominations. Sometimes it was necessary to converse at the same time with a soldier, an apothecary, a canon, a fine lady, and a lay brother. I grumbled, swore, and wished all this troublesome medley at the devil, while she seemed to enjoy it, laughing at my chagrin till the tears ran down her cheeks. What excited her mirth still more was to see that my anger was increased by not being able myself to refrain from laughter. These little intervals, in which I enjoyed the pleasure of grumbling, were charming; and if, during the dispute, another importunate visitor arrived, she would add to her amusement by maliciously prolonging the visit, meantime casting glances at me for which I could almost have beaten her: nor could she without difficulty refrain from laughter on seeing my constrained politeness, though every moment glancing at her the look of a fury; while, even in spite of myself, I thought the scene truly diverting.

All this, without being pleasing in itself, contributed to amuse, because it made up a part of a life which I thought delightful. Nothing that was performed around me, nothing that I was obliged to do, suited my taste, but everything suited my heart; and I believe at length I should have liked the study of medicine, had not my natural distaste for it perpetually engaged us in whimsical scenes, that prevented my thinking of it in a serious light. It was perhaps the first time that this art produced mirth. I pretended to distinguish a medical book by its smell; and, what was more diverting, was seldom mistaken. She made me taste the most nauseous drugs: in

vain I ran, or endeavoured to defend myself; in spite of resistance or wry faces, spite of my struggles, or even of my teeth, when I saw her charming fingers approach my mouth, I must needs open it and suck. When shut up in an apartment with all her medical apparatus, any one to have heard us running and shouting amidst peals of laughter would rather have imagined that we were acting a farce than preparing opiates or elixirs.

My time, however, was not entirely passed in these fooleries. In the apartment which I occupied I found a few books — there were the *Spectator*, Puffendorf, Saint-Evremond, and the *Henriade*. Though I had not my old passion for books, yet to pass the time I read parts of these. The *Spectator* was particularly pleasing and serviceable to me. The Abbé de Gouvon had taught me to read less eagerly, and with a greater degree of attention, which rendered my studies more serviceable. I accustomed myself to reflect on elocution and the elegance of composition, exercising myself in discerning pure French from my provincial idiom. For example, I corrected an orthographical fault (which I had in common with all Genevese) by these two lines of the *Henriade:*

> Soit qu'un ancien respect pour le sang de leurs maîtres
> Parlât encore pour lui dans le cœur de ces traîtres.

I was struck with the word *parlât*, and found a *t* was necessary to form the third person of the subjunctive, whereas I had always written and pronounced it *parla*, as in the perfect of the indicative.

Sometimes I chatted to Mamma about my studies; sometimes I read to her, in which I found great satisfaction; and, as I endeavoured to read well, it was extremely serviceable to me. I have already observed that her mind was cultivated; her understanding was at this time in its meridian. Several people of learning having been assidu-

ous to ingratiate themselves, had taught her to distinguish works of merit. Her taste, if I may so express myself, was rather Protestant, ever speaking warmly of Bayle, and highly esteeming Saint-Evremond, though the latter was long since almost forgotten in France; but this did not prevent her having a taste for good literature, or expressing her opinions with elegance. She had been brought up with polite company, and coming young to Savoy, by associating with people of the best fashion, had lost the affected manners of the Vaud country, where the ladies mistake wit for sense, and only speak in epigram.

Though she had seen the Court but superficially, that glance was sufficient to give her a competent idea of it; and, notwithstanding secret jealousies and the murmurs excited by her conduct and running in debt, she ever preserved friends there, and never lost her pension. She knew the world, and was possessed of sense and reflection to make her experience useful. This was her favourite theme in our conversations, and was directly opposite to my chimerical ideas, though the kind of instruction I particularly had occasion for. We read La Bruyère together; he pleased her more than La Rochefoucauld, who is a dull, melancholy author, particularly to youth, who is not fond of contemplating man as he really is. In moralising, the train of her discourse was sometimes vague and wandering; but by kissing her lips or hand from time to time, I was easily consoled, and never found her remarks too long or wearisome.

This life was too delightful to be lasting. I felt this, and the uneasiness that thought gave me was the only thing that disturbed my enjoyment. Even in playfulness Mamma studied my disposition, observed and interrogated me, forming projects for my future fortune which I could readily have dispensed with. Happily it

was not sufficient to know my disposition, inclinations, and talents; it was likewise necessary to find a situation in which they would be useful, and this was not the work of a day. Even the prejudices this good woman had conceived in favour of my merit put off the time of calling it into action, by rendering her more difficult in the choice of means; thus, thanks to the good opinion she entertained of me, everything answered to my wish; but a change was inevitable, and thenceforth farewell to tranquillity.

One of her relations, named Monsieur d'Aubonne, came to see her; a man of great understanding and intrigue, being, like her, fond of projects, though careful not to ruin himself by them — a species of adventurer. He had offered Cardinal Fleury a very compact plan for a lottery, which, however, had not been approved of, and he was now going to propose it to the Court of Turin, where it was accepted and put into execution. He remained some time at Annecy, where he fell in love with the Intendant's lady, who was very amiable, much to my taste, and the only person whom I saw with pleasure at Mamma's house. Monsieur d'Aubonne saw me. I was strongly recommended by his relation. He promised, therefore, to question me and see what I was fit for, and, if he found me capable, to seek me a situation.

Madame de Warens sent me to him on two or three successive mornings, under pretence of messages, without acquainting me with her intention. He spoke to me gaily, on various subjects, without any appearance of affectation or observation; his familiarity presently set me talking, which by his cheerful and jesting manner he encouraged without restraint. I was absolutely charmed with him. The result of his observations was that, notwithstanding the animation of my countenance and promising exterior, if not absolutely silly, I was a lad of

very little sense, and without original ideas or learning; in fine, very ignorant in all respects, and if I could arrive at being curate of some village, it was the utmost honour I ought ever to aspire to. Such was the account he gave of me to Madame de Warens. This was not the first time such an opinion had been formed of me, neither was it the last, the judgment of Monsieur Masseron having been repeatedly confirmed.

The cause of these opinions is too much connected with my character not to need a particular explanation; for it will not be supposed that I can in conscience subscribe to them; and with all possible impartiality, whatever Messieurs Masseron, d'Aubonne, and many others may have said, I cannot help contradicting them.

Two things, very opposite, unite in me, and in a manner which I cannot myself conceive. My temperament is extremely ardent, my passions lively and impetuous, yet my ideas are produced slowly, with entanglement, and fail to offer themselves at the proper moment. It might be said my heart and understanding do not belong to the same individual. A sentiment takes possession of my soul with the rapidity of lightning, but instead of illuminating, it dazzles and confounds me; I feel all, but see nothing; I am excited, yet stupid; to think, I must be cool. What is astonishing, my conception is clear and penetrating, if not hurried. I can make excellent impromptus at leisure, but on the instant could never say or do anything worth notice. I could hold a tolerable conversation by the post, as they say the Spaniards play at chess; and when I read that anecdote of a Duke of Savoy, who turned himself round, while on the road, to cry out, 'À votre gorge, marchand de Paris!'[1] I said, 'Here am I.'

[1] 'At thy throat, Paris merchant!' The speaker was Charles-Emmanuel I., who visited the court of Henri IV. in 1599.

This slowness of thought, joined to vivacity of feeling, I am not only sensible of in conversation, but even alone. When I write, my ideas are arranged with the utmost difficulty. They whirl about and ferment till they discompose, heat, and bring on a palpitation; during this state of agitation I see nothing properly, cannot write a single word, and must wait till it is over. Insensibly the agitation subsides, the chaos acquires form, and each circumstance takes its proper place. Have you never seen an opera in Italy? During the changes of scene everything is in confusion, the decorations are intermingled, there is a dragging to and fro, and one would suppose that all would be overthrown; yet little by little everything is arranged, nothing appears wanting, and we feel surprised to see the tumult succeeded by the most delightful spectacle. This is a resemblance of what passes in my brain when I attempt to write. Had I always waited till that confusion was past, and then painted, in their natural beauties, the objects that had presented themselves, few authors would have surpassed me.

Thence arises the extreme difficulty I find in writing; my manuscripts — blotted, scratched, and scarcely legible — attest the trouble they cost me; nor is there one of them that I have not been obliged to transcribe four or five times before it went to press. Never could I do anything when placed at a table, pen in hand; it must be while walking among the rocks or in the woods. It is at night in my bed, when sleep deserts me, that I compose — it may be judged how slowly, particularly for a man who has not the advantage of verbal memory, and never in his life could retain by heart six verses. Some of my periods I have turned and re-turned in my head five or six nights before they were fit to be put to paper. Thus it is that I succeed better in works that require laborious attention than those that appear more trivial, such as

letters, in which I could never succeed, and being obliged to write one is to me a kind of punishment; nor can I in this way express my thoughts on the most trivial subjects save at the cost of hours of fatigue. If I write immediately what strikes me, my letter is without beginning or end — a long, confused string of expressions, which, when read, can hardly be understood.

It is not only painful to me to give language to ideas, but even to receive them. I have studied mankind, and think myself a tolerable observer, yet I know nothing from what I see, but all from what I remember; nor have I any clear understanding except in my recollections. From all that is said or done, from all that passes in my presence, I feel nothing, conceive nothing, the exterior sign being all that strikes me. Afterwards the whole returns to my remembrance; I recollect the place, the time, the manner, look, and gesture — not a circumstance escapes me; it is then, from what has been done or said, that I imagine what has been thought, and I have rarely found myself mistaken.

So little master of my understanding when alone, let any one judge what I must be in conversation, where to speak with any degree of ease you must think of a thousand things at the same time. The bare idea of so many rules and observances, some of which I should be certain to forget, is sufficient to intimidate me. Nor can I comprehend how people can have the confidence to converse in large companies, where each word must pass in review before so many, and where it would be requisite to know their several characters and histories to avoid saying what might give offence. In this particular, those who frequent the world have a great advantage, as they know better where to be silent, and can speak with greater confidence; yet even they sometimes let fall absurdities. In what predicament, then, must he be who drops as it

were from the clouds? It is almost impossible he should speak for a few minutes with impunity. In a *tête-à-tête* there is a still worse inconvenience; that is, the necessity of talking perpetually — at least the necessity of answering when spoken to, and keeping up the conversation when the other is silent. This insupportable constraint is alone sufficient to disgust me with society; for I cannot form an idea of a greater torment than being obliged to speak continually and to the point. I know not whether it proceeds from my mortal hatred to all constraint; but, if I am obliged to speak, I infallibly talk nonsense.

What is still worse, instead of learning how to be silent when I have absolutely nothing to say, it is generally at such times that I have a violent inclination; and endeavouring to pay my debt of conversation as speedily as possible, I hastily gabble a number of words without ideas, happy when they only chance to mean nothing. Thus endeavouring to conquer or hide my incapacity, I rarely fail to show it. Amongst a thousand examples that I might cite, I take one, not from my younger years, but from the time when I had had long experience of the world, and had adopted, if that were possible, its easy style and manner. I was one evening seated between two ladies of fashion, and a gentleman whom I may be permitted to name — Monsieur le Duc de Gontaut. There was no one else present, and I strove to supply a few words of conversation — heaven knows what — in a company of four, three of whom assuredly needed nothing of the kind from me. The lady of the house bade the servant bring her an opiate, which she took twice daily for an ailment of the stomach. Seeing her swallow it with a wry face, the other lady said with a laugh, 'Is that Monsieur Tronchin's opiate?'[1] 'I think not,'

[1] Théodore Tronchin (1709–1781) was a celebrated physician, skilful in the treatment of female complaints. The lady who took the opiate on this occasion was Madame de Luxembourg; the other was Madame de Mirepoix.

answered the former, in the same tone. 'I think it is scarcely much better,' gallantly added the fine-witted Rousseau. This produced a sudden pause, no one spoke or even smiled, and the conversation immediately took a different turn. Before other women this ill-timed speech might have passed as a trifling jest, but addressed to one who was too charming to have altogether escaped the notice of idle gossipers — one whom certainly I had no wish to offend — it was terrible; and I imagine that both the male and female auditor had some difficulty in repressing their anger. Such are the shafts of wit that I launch through a desire to talk when I have nothing to say. Not readily shall I forget this one; for, besides being memorable in itself, its results but too often recall it to my mind.

I think I have said enough to show that, though not a fool, I have frequently passed for one, even among people capable of judging; this was the more vexatious, as my physiognomy and eyes promised otherwise, and, expectation being frustrated, my stupidity appeared the more shocking. This detail, which a particular occasion gave birth to, will not be useless in the sequel, being a key to many of my actions which might otherwise appear unaccountable, and have been attributed to an unsociable humour I do not possess. I would love society as much as any man, were I not certain to exhibit myself in it, not only disadvantageously, but totally different from what I really am. The plan I have adopted of writing and retirement is what exactly suits me. Had I been present, my worth would never have been known, no one would even have suspected it; thus it was with Madame Dupin, a woman of sense, in whose house I lived for several years; indeed, she has often since owned it to me. On the whole, however, this rule may be liable to some exceptions, and I shall return to the subject hereafter.

The estimate of my talents thus fixed, the situation I was capable of premised, the question only remained how to render me capable of fulfilling my destined vocation. The principal difficulty was that my education was incomplete, and that I did not know Latin enough for a priest. Madame de Warens determined to have me taught for some time at the seminary, and accordingly spoke of it to the superior, who was a Lazarist, called Monsieur Gros, a good-natured little fellow, half blind, meagre, grey-haired, the most sharp-witted and the least pedantic of any Lazarist I ever knew — which, in fact, is saying no great matter.

He frequently visited Mamma, who entertained, caressed, and made much of him, letting him sometimes lace her stays, an office he was willing enough to perform. While thus employed she would run about the room, this way or that, as occasion happened to call her. Drawn by the lace, Monsieur le Supérieur followed grumbling, and repeating at every moment, 'Pray, madam, do stand still,' the whole forming a scene truly diverting.

Monsieur Gros willingly assented to Mamma's project, and for a very moderate pension charged himself with the care of instructing me. The consent of the bishop was all that remained necessary, who not only granted it, but offered to pay the pension, permitting me to retain the secular habit till they could judge by a trial what success might be hoped for.

What a change! but I was obliged to submit; though I went to the seminary with about the same spirits as if they had been taking me to execution. What a melancholy abode — especially for one who left the house of a pretty woman! I carried one book with me that I had begged Mamma to lend me, and found it a capital resource. It will not be easily conjectured what kind of

book this was — it was a music-book. Among the talents she had cultivated, music had not been forgotten; she had a tolerably good voice, sang agreeably, and played on the harpsichord. She had taken the pains to give me some lessons in singing, though obliged to begin at the rudiments, for I hardly knew the music of our psalms. Eight or ten interrupted lessons, far from putting me in a condition to read the notation, did not teach me half the notes; notwithstanding, I had such a passion for the art, that I determined to exercise myself alone. The book I took was not of the most easy kind; it contained the cantatas of Clérambault. It may be conceived with what attention and perseverance I studied, when I inform my reader that, without knowing anything of transposition or quantity, I contrived to read and sing with tolerable correctness the first air in the cantata of 'Alpheus and Arethusa'; it is true this air is so justly set that it is only necessary to recite the verses in their due measure in order to catch the music.

There was at the seminary a cursed Lazarist, who, by undertaking to teach me Latin, made me detest it. His hair was coarse, black, and greasy, his face like those formed in gingerbread; he had the voice of a buffalo, the countenance of an owl, and the bristles of a boar in lieu of a beard; his smile was sardonic, and his limbs played like those of a puppet moved by wires. I have forgotten his odious name, but the remembrance of his frightful hypocritical countenance remains with me, though hardly can I recollect it without trembling. I call to mind our meeting in the gallery, when he graciously advanced his filthy square cap as a sign for me to enter his apartment, more dismal in my apprehension than a dungeon. Let any one judge the contrast between my present master and the courtly abbé.

Had I remained two months at the mercy of this mon-

ster, I am certain my head could not have sustained it; but the good Monsieur Gros, perceiving that I was melancholy, grew thin, and did not eat my victuals, guessed the cause of my uneasiness (which indeed was not very difficult), and, taking me from the claws of this beast, by another yet more striking contrast, placed me with the gentlest of men, a young Faucigneran abbé named Monsieur Gâtier, who studied at the seminary, and out of complaisance for Monsieur Gros, and probably out of humanity to myself, spared some time from the prosecution of his own studies in order to direct mine. Never did I see a more pleasing countenance than that of Monsieur Gâtier. He was fair-complexioned, his beard rather inclined to red, his behaviour, like that of the generality of his countrymen — who, under a coarseness of countenance, conceal much understanding — marked in him a truly sensible and affectionate soul. In his large blue eyes there was a mixture of softness, tenderness, and melancholy, which made it impossible to see him without feeling one's self interested. From the looks and manner of this young abbé he might have been supposed to have foreseen his destiny, and that he was born to be unhappy.

His disposition did not belie his physiognomy. Full of patience and complaisance, he rather appeared to study with than instruct me. So much was not necessary to make me love him, his predecessor having rendered that very easy; yet, notwithstanding all the time he bestowed on me, notwithstanding our mutual good inclinations, and that his plan of teaching was excellent, with much labour I made little progress. It is very singular that, with a clear conception, I could never learn much from masters except my father and Monsieur Lambercier; the little I know besides I have learned alone, as will be seen hereafter. My spirit, impatient of

every species of constraint, cannot submit to the law of the moment; even the fear of not learning prevents my being attentive, and a dread of wearying those who teach makes me feign to understand them; thus they proceed faster than I comprehend, and the conclusion is I learn nothing. My understanding must take its own time, and cannot submit to that of another.

The time for ordination being arrived, Monsieur Gâtier returned to his province as deacon, bearing with him my gratitude, attachment, and sorrow for his loss. The prayers I offered for him were no more answered than those I offered for myself. Some years after I learned that, being vicar of a parish, a young girl was with child by him, being the only one (though he possessed a very tender heart) with whom he was ever in love. This was a dreadful scandal in a diocese severely governed, where the priests (being under good regulation) ought never to have children — except by married women. Having infringed this politic law, he was put in prison, defamed, and driven from his benefice. I know not whether it was ever after in his power to re-establish his affairs; but the remembrance of his misfortunes, which were deeply engraven on my heart, struck me when I wrote *Émile*, and, uniting Monsieur Gâtier with Monsieur Gaime, I formed from these two worthy priests the character of the Savoyard Vicar, and flatter myself that the imitation has not dishonoured the originals.

While I was at the seminary, Monsieur d'Aubonne was obliged to quit Annecy, Monsieur l'Intendant being displeased that he made love to his wife, which was acting like a dog in the manger, for though Madame Corvesi was amiable, he lived very ill with her; his ultra-montane tastes made her unserviceable to him, and he treated her with such brutality that a separation was talked of. Monsieur Corvesi, by repeated oppressions, at length

procured a dismissal from his employment; he was a most disagreeable man; a mole could not be blacker nor an owl more knavish. It is said that the natives of Provence revenge themselves on their enemies by songs. Monsieur d'Aubonne revenged himself on his by a comedy, which he sent to Madame de Warens, who showed it to me. I was pleased with it, and immediately conceived the idea of writing one, to try whether I was so silly as the author had pronounced me. This project was not executed till I went to Chambéri, where I wrote *L'Amant de lui-même.* Thus, when I said in the preface to that piece, 'it was written at eighteen,' I cut off a few years.

Nearly about this time an event happened, not very important in itself, but whose consequence affected me, and made a noise in the world when I had forgotten it. Once a week I was permitted to go abroad; it is not necessary to say what use I made of this liberty. Being one Sunday at Mamma's, a building belonging to the Cordeliers, which joined her house, took fire; this building, which contained their oven, being full of dry fagots, blazed violently and greatly endangered the house; for the wind happening to drive the flames that way, it was covered with them. The furniture, therefore, was hastily got out and carried into the garden which fronted the windows of the room I had formerly occupied, on the other side of the before-mentioned brook. I was so alarmed that I threw indiscriminately everything that came to hand out of the window, even to a large stone mortar, which at another time I should have found it difficult to remove, and should have thrown a handsome looking-glass after it, had not some one prevented me. The good bishop, who that day was visiting Mamma, did not remain idle; he took her into the garden, where they went to prayers with the rest that were assembled there,

and where, some time afterwards, I found them on their knees, and presently joined them. While the good man was at his devotions the wind changed, so suddenly and critically, that the flames which had covered the house, and began to enter the windows, were carried to the other side of the court, and the house received no damage. Two years after, Monsieur de Bernex being dead, the Antonines, his former brethren, began to collect anecdotes which might serve as arguments for his beatification; at the desire of Père Boudet, I joined to these an attestation of what I have just related, in doing which, though I attested no more than the truth, I certainly acted ill, in that I described it as though it had been a miracle. I had seen the bishop in prayer, and had likewise seen the wind change during that prayer, and even much to the purpose, all this I could certify truly; but that one of these facts was the cause of the other I ought not to have attested, because it is what I could not possibly be assured of. Thus much I may say, that as far as I can recollect what my ideas were at that time, I was sincerely a Catholic, and acted in good faith. Love of the marvellous is natural to the human heart; my veneration for the virtuous prelate, and secret pride in having, perhaps, contributed to the miracle, all helped to seduce me; and certainly, if this miracle was the effect of ardent prayer, I had a right to claim a share of the merit.

More than thirty years after, when I published the *Lettres de la Montagne*, Monsieur Fréron (I know not by what means) discovered this attestation, and made use of it in his paper. I must confess the discovery was very well timed, and appeared very diverting, even to me.

I was destined to be the outcast of every condition; for, notwithstanding Monsieur Gâtier gave the most favourable account he possibly could of my studies, they plainly saw the improvement I received bore no propor-

tion to the pains taken to instruct me, which was no encouragement to continue them. The bishop and superior, therefore, were disheartened, and I was sent back to Madame de Warens, as a subject not even fit to make a priest of; but as they allowed at the same time that I was a tolerably good lad, and far from being vicious, this account counterbalanced the former, and determined her not to abandon me.

I carried back in triumph her music-book, which had been so useful to me, the air of 'Alpheus and Arethusa' being almost all I had learned at the seminary. My predilection for this art started the idea of making a musician of me. A convenient opportunity offered: once a week, at least, she had a concert at her house, and the music-master from the cathedral, who directed this little band, came frequently to see her. This was a Parisian named Monsieur le Maître, a good composer, very lively, gay, young, well-made, of little understanding, but, upon the whole, a good sort of man. Mamma made us acquainted; I attached myself to him, and he seemed not displeased with me. A pension was talked of, and agreed on; in short, I went home with him, and passed the winter the more agreeably at his chambers, as they were not above twenty paces distant from Madame de Warens', where we frequently supped together.

It may easily be supposed that this situation, ever gay, and singing with the musicians and children of the choir, was more pleasing to me than the seminary and fathers of Saint-Lazare. This life, though free, was regular; here I learned to prize independence, but never to abuse it. For six whole months I never once went out except to see Mamma, or to church, nor had I any inclination to it. This interval is one of those in which I enjoyed the greatest satisfaction, and which I have ever recollected with pleasure. Among the various situations

I have been placed in, some were marked with such an idea of virtuous satisfaction, that the bare remembrance affects me as if they were yet present. I vividly recollect the time, the place, the persons, and even the temperature and odour of the air, while the lively idea of a certain local impression peculiar to those times transports me back again to the very spot; for example, all that was repeated at our meetings, all that was sung in the choir, everything that passed there — the beautiful and noble vestments of the canons, the chasubles of the priests, the mitres of the singers, the persons of the musicians, an old lame carpenter who played the counter-bass, a little fair abbé who performed on the violin, the ragged cassock which Monsieur le Maître (after taking off his sword) used to put over his secular habit, and the fine surplice with which he covered the rags of the former when he went to the choir, the pride with which I bore my little flute, and seated myself in the orchestra, to assist in a little recitative which Monsieur le Maître had composed on purpose for me, the good dinner that afterwards awaited us, and the good appetites we carried to it. This concourse of objects, strongly retraced in my memory, has charmed me a hundred times as much, or perhaps more, than ever the reality had done. I have always preserved an affection for a certain air of the 'Conditor alme siderum,' because one Sunday in Advent I heard that hymn sung on the steps of the cathedral (according to the custom of that place) as I lay in bed before daybreak. Mademoiselle Merceret, Mamma's chamber-maid, knew something of music; I shall never forget a little piece that Monsieur le Maître made me sing with her, and which her mistress listened to with great satisfaction; — in a word, every particular, even down to the good servant Perrine, whom the boys of the choir took such delight in teasing. The recollec-

tions of these times of happiness and innocence frequently returning to my mind, both ravish and affect me.

I lived at Annecy nearly a year without the least reproach, giving universal satisfaction. Since my departure from Turin I had been guilty of no folly, nor committed any while under the eye of Mamma. She was my conductor, and ever led me right; my attachment for her became my only passion; and, what proves it was not a giddy one, my heart and understanding were in unison. It is true that a single sentiment, absorbing all my faculties, put me out of a capacity for learning even music; but this was not my fault, since to the strongest inclination I added the utmost assiduity. I was inattentive and thoughtful; I sighed; how could I help it? Nothing was wanting towards my progress that depended on me; meantime, it only required a subject that might inspire me to occasion the commission of new follies: that subject presented itself, chance arranged it, and (as will be seen hereafter) my inconsiderate head gave in to it.

One evening, in the month of February, when it was very cold, being all seated round the fire, we heard some one knock at the street door. Perrine took a light, went down and opened it. A young man entering, came upstairs, presented himself with an easy air, and, making Monsieur le Maître a short but well-turned compliment, announced himself as a French musician, constrained by the state of his finances to take this liberty. The heart of the good le Maître leaped at the name of a French musician, for he passionately loved both his country and profession; he therefore offered the young traveller the lodging which he appeared to stand much in need of, and which he accepted without much ceremony. I observed him while he was chatting and warming himself before supper. He was short and square-built, having some fault in his shape, though without any particular

deformity. He had (if I may so express myself) an appearance of being hunchbacked, with flat shoulders, and I think he limped. He wore a black coat, rather worn than old, which hung in tatters; a very fine but dirty shirt; frayed ruffles; a pair of gaiters so large that he could have put both his legs into either of them; and, to secure himself from the snow, a little hat, only fit to be carried under the arm. In all this whimsical equipage there was, however, something noble which his manners did not belie. His countenance was expressive and agreeable, and he spoke with facility, though hardly with modesty. In short, everything about him bore the marks of a young debauchee, who did not crave assistance like a beggar, but as a thoughtless madcap. He told us his name was Venture de Villeneuve, that he came from Paris, had lost his way, and, seeming to forget that he had announced himself as a musician, added that he was going to Grenoble to see a relation who was a member of parliament.

During supper we talked of music, on which subject he spoke well. He knew all the great virtuosi, all the celebrated works, all the actors, actresses, pretty women, and nobility. In short, nothing was mentioned that he did not seem to be thoroughly acquainted with, though no sooner was any topic started than by some drollery, which set every one a-laughing, he made them forget what had been said. This was on a Saturday; the next day there was to be music at the cathedral. Monsieur le Maître asked him if he would sing there. 'Very willingly.' 'What part would he choose?' 'The counter-tenor'; and immediately began speaking of other things. Before he went to church they offered him his part to peruse, but he did not even look at it. This gasconnade surprised Le Maître. 'You'll see,' said he, whispering to me, 'that he does not know a single note.' I replied, 'I

fear it very much.' I followed them into the church, but was extremely uneasy, and when they began my heart beat violently, so much was I interested in his behalf.

I was presently reassured. He sang his two recitatives with all imaginable taste and judgment; and, what was yet more, with a very agreeable voice. I never enjoyed a more pleasing surprise. After mass Monsieur Venture received the highest compliments from the canons and musicians, whom he answered playfully, though with much gracefulness. Monsieur le Maître embraced him heartily; I did the same; he saw I was rejoiced at his success, and appeared pleased at my satisfaction.

It will be easily surmised that after having been delighted with Monsieur Bâcle, who at the best was a rather commonplace man, I should be infatuated with Monsieur Venture, who had education, wit, talents, and a knowledge of the world, and might be called an agreeable rake. This was exactly what happened, and would, I believe, have happened to any young man in my place, especially supposing him possessed of better judgment to distinguish merit, and more propensity to be engaged by it; for Venture doubtless possessed a considerable share, and one in particular, very rare at his age, namely, that of never being in haste to display his talents. It is true, he boasted of many things he did not understand, but of those that he knew, which were very numerous, he said nothing, patiently waiting some occasion to display them, which he then did with ease, though without forwardness, and this gave them a striking effect. As there was ever some intermission between the proofs of his various abilities, it was impossible to conjecture whether he had ever discovered all. Playful, giddy, inexhaustible, delightful in conversation, ever smiling but never laughing, he repeated the rudest things in the most elegant manner. Even the most modest women were astonished at what

they endured from him: it was in vain that they strove to feel angry; they could not assume the appearance of it. He lacked but one quality — the art of conquering female virtue; but those who possessed that art would have found him an excellent companion. It would be extraordinary that with so many agreeable talents, in a country where they are so well understood and so much admired, he should long remain a mere musician.

My attachment to Monsieur Venture, more reasonable in its cause, was also less extravagant in its effects, though more lively and durable than that I had conceived for Monsieur Bâcle. I loved to see him, to hear him; all his actions appeared charming, everything he said was an oracle to me, but the enchantment did not extend so far as to disable me from quitting him. Close by I had a good protector against such excess. Besides, though believing that his maxims held good for one of his own character, I felt that they were unsuited to mine: I needed another kind of delight, of which I dared not speak to him, confident as I was that he would have made a jest of it. Nevertheless, I would willingly have formed a link of union between these two attachments. I spoke of him with transport to Mamma; Le Maître likewise spoke in his praise; and she consented that we should bring him to her house. This interview did not succeed. He thought her affected; she found him a libertine, and, alarmed that I had formed such an ill acquaintance, not only forbade me bringing him there again, but likewise painted so vividly the danger I ran with this young man, that I became a little more circumspect in giving in to the attachment; and very happily, both for my manners and intellect, we were soon separated.

Monsieur le Maître, like most of his profession, loved good wine. At table he was moderate, but when busy in his study he must drink. His maid was so well acquainted

with this humour that no sooner had he prepared his paper to compose, and taken his violoncello, than the jug and glass arrived, and the former was replenished from time to time; thus, without being ever absolutely intoxicated, he was usually in a state of elevation. This was really unfortunate, for he had a good heart, and was so playful that Mamma used to call him *the kitten*. Unhappily, he loved his profession, laboured much and drank proportionately, which injured his health, and at length soured his temper. Sometimes he was gloomy and easily offended, though incapable of rudeness, or giving offence to any one, for never did he utter an evil word, even to the boys of the choir; on the other hand, he would not suffer another to offend him, which was but just. The misfortune was that, having little understanding, he did not properly discriminate, and was often angry without cause.

The Chapter of Geneva, where so many princes and bishops formerly thought it an honour to be seated, though in exile it lost its ancient splendour, has retained its pride. To be admitted, you must either be a gentleman by birth or doctor of the Sorbonne. If there be a pardonable pride, after that derived from personal merit, it is doubtless that arising from birth, though, in general, priests having laymen in their service treat them with sufficient haughtiness, and thus the canons often behaved to poor Le Maître. The chanter, in particular, who was called the Abbé de Vidonne, in other respects a well-behaved man, but too full of his nobility, did not always show him the attention his talents merited. Monsieur le Maître could not bear these indignities patiently; and this year, during Passion Week, they had a more serious dispute than ordinary. At an institution dinner that the bishop gave the canons, and to which Le Maître was always invited, the abbé failed in some for-

mality, adding, at the same time, some harsh words, which the other could not digest. He instantly formed the resolution to quit them the following night; nor could any consideration make him give up his design, though Madame de Warens, whom he went to take leave of, spared no pains to appease him. He could not relinquish the pleasure of leaving his tyrants embarrassed for the Easter feast, at which time he knew they stood in the greatest need of him. He was most concerned about his music, which he wished to take with him; but this could not easily be accomplished, as it filled a large case, and was very heavy, and could not be carried under the arm.

Mamma did what I should have done in her situation; and, indeed, what I should yet do. After many useless efforts to retain him, seeing he was resolved to depart, whatever might be the event, she formed the resolution to give him every possible assistance. I must confess Le Maître deserved it of her, for he was, if I may use the expression, dedicated to her service, in whatever appertained either to his art or knowledge, and the readiness with which he obliged gave a double value to his complaisance. Thus she only paid back on an essential occasion the many favours he had been conferring on her for some three or four years; though, I should observe, she possessed a soul that, to fulfil such duties, had no occasion to be reminded of previous obligation. Accordingly she ordered me to follow Monsieur le Maître at least as far as Lyons, and continue with him as long as he might have occasion for my services. She has since avowed that a desire of detaching me from Venture had a great hand in this arrangement. She consulted her faithful servant Claude Anet about the conveyance of the abovementioned case. He advised that, instead of hiring a beast at Annecy, which would infallibly discover us, it would be better at night to take it to some neighbouring

village, and there hire an ass to carry it to Seyssel, which, being in the French dominions, we should have nothing to fear. This plan was adopted; we departed the same night at seven o'clock, and Mamma, under pretence of paying my expenses, increased the purse of the poor 'kitten' by an addition that was very acceptable. Claude Anet, the gardener, and myself carried the case as best we could to the first village, then hired an ass, and the same night reached Seyssel.

I think I have already remarked that there are times in which I am so unlike myself that I might be taken for a man of a directly opposite disposition; I shall now give an example of this. Monsieur Reydelet, curate of Seyssel, was canon of Saint-Pierre, consequently known to Monsieur le Maître, and one of the people from whom he should have taken most pains to conceal himself: my advice, on the contrary, was to present ourselves to him, and, under some pretext, entreat entertainment as if we visited him by consent of the chapter. Le Maître adopted this idea, which seemed to give his revenge an appearance of mockery and satirical merriment; in short, we went boldly to Reydelet, who received us very kindly. Le Maître told him he was going to Bellay by desire of the bishop, that he might superintend the music during the Easter holidays, and that he proposed returning that way in a few days. To support this tale I told a hundred others, so naturally that Monsieur Reydelet thought me a very agreeable youth, and treated me with great friendship and civility. We were well regaled and well lodged: Monsieur Reydelet scarcely knew how to make enough of us; and we parted the best friends in the world, with a promise to stop longer on our return. We found it difficult to refrain from laughter, or wait till we were alone to give free vent to our mirth. Indeed, even now the bare recollection of it forces a smile, for never was

waggery better or more fortunately maintained. This would have made us merry during the remainder of our journey, if Monsieur le Maître, who did not cease drinking and fooling, had not been two or three times attacked with a complaint which was growing upon him, and which resembled epilepsy. These fits threw me into the most fearful embarrassments, from which I resolved to extricate myself at the first opportunity.

According to the information given to Monsieur Reydelet, we passed our Easter holidays at Bellay, and, though not expected there, were received by the music-master and welcomed by every one with great pleasure. Monsieur le Maître was of considerable note in his profession, and indeed merited that distinction. The music-master of Bellay, who was fond of his own works, endeavoured to obtain the approbation of so good a judge; for, besides being a connoisseur, Le Maître was equitable, neither a jealous, ill-natured critic nor a servile flatterer. He was so superior to the generality of country music-masters, and they were so sensible of it, that they treated him rather as their chief than a brother musician.

Having passed four or five days very agreeably at Bellay, we departed, and, continuing our journey without meeting with any accidents except those I have just spoken of, arrived at Lyons, and were lodged at Notre-Dame de Pitié. While we waited for the arrival of the before-mentioned case (which, by the assistance of another lie, and the care of our good patron Monsieur Reydelet, we had embarked on the Rhône), Monsieur le Maître went to visit his acquaintance, and among others Père Caton, a Cordelier, who will be spoken of hereafter, and the Abbé Dortan, Comte de Lyon, both of whom received him well, but afterwards betrayed him, as will be seen presently; indeed, his good fortune terminated with Monsieur Reydelet.

Two days after our arrival at Lyons, as we traversed a little street not far from our inn, Le Maître was attacked by one of his fits; but it was now so violent as to give me the utmost alarm. I screamed with terror, called for help, and, naming our inn, entreated some one to bear him to it; then, while the people were assembled and busy round a man that had fallen senseless in the street, he was abandoned by the only friend on whom he could have any reasonable dependence. I seized the instant when no one heeded me, turned the corner of the street, and disappeared. Thanks to heaven I have made my third painful confession. If many such remained I should certainly abandon the work I have undertaken.

Of all the incidents I have yet related a few traces are remaining in the places where I then lived; but what I have to relate in the following book is almost entirely unknown: these are the greatest extravagances of my life, and it is fortunate they had not a worse conclusion. My head, if I may use the simile, screwed up to the pitch of an instrument it did not naturally accord with, had lost its diapason; in time it returned to it again, when I discontinued my follies, or at least gave in to those more consonant to my disposition. This epoch of my youth I am least able to recollect, nothing having passed sufficiently interesting to influence my heart and make me clearly retrace the remembrance. In so many successive changes it is difficult not to make some transpositions of time or place. I write absolutely from memory, without notes or materials to help my recollection. Some events are as fresh in my ideas as if they had recently happened, but there are certain chasms which I cannot fill up but by the aid of descriptions as confused as the remembrance. It is possible, therefore, that for want of due information I may have erred in trifles, and perhaps shall again; but in every matter of importance I can answer that the

account is faithfully exact, and with the same veracity the reader may depend I shall be careful to continue it.

My resolution was soon taken after quitting Monsieur le Maître. I set out immediately for Annecy. The cause and mystery of our departure had interested me for the safety of our retreat. This interest, which entirely employed my thoughts for some days, had banished every other idea; but no sooner was I secure and in tranquillity than my predominant sentiment regained its place. Nothing flattered, nothing tempted me, I had no wish but to return to Mamma; the tenderness and truth of my attachment to her had uprooted from my heart every imaginable project, and all the follies of ambition. I conceived no happiness but living near her, nor could I take a step without feeling that the distance from that happiness was increased. I returned, therefore, as soon as possible, with such speed and with my spirits in such a state of agitation that, though I recall with pleasure all my other travels, I have not the least recollection of this, save my leaving Lyons and reaching Annecy. Let any one judge whether this last event can have slipped my memory, when told that on my arrival I found Madame de Warens was not there: she had set out for Paris!

I was never well informed of the motives of this journey. I am certain she would have told me had I earnestly asked her, but never was man less curious to learn the secrets of his friend. My heart, solely occupied with the present, finds its whole capacity filled therewith, and, save past pleasures, henceforth my only enjoyment, there remains not a vacant corner for things that are no more. All that I conceive from what I heard of it is, that in the revolution caused at Turin by the abdication of the King of Sardinia, she feared being forgotten, and was willing, by favour of the intrigues of Monsieur

d'Aubonne, to seek the same advantage in the Court of France, where she has often told me she should have preferred it, as the multiplicity of business there prevents one's conduct from being so closely inspected. If this was her business, it is astonishing that on her return she was not ill received; be that as it will, she continued to enjoy her allowance without any interruption. Many people imagined she was charged with some secret commission, either by the bishop, who then had business at the Court of France, where he himself was soon after obliged to go, or some one yet more powerful, who knew how to insure her a gracious reception at her return. If this were the case, it is certain the ambassadress was not ill chosen, since, being still young and handsome, she had all the necessary qualifications to succeed in a negotiation.

BOOK IV

[1731–1732]

LET any one judge my surprise and grief at not finding her on my arrival. I now began to feel regret at having abandoned Monsieur le Maître, and my uneasiness increased when I learned the misfortunes that had befallen him. His box of music, containing all his fortune — that precious box, preserved with so much care and fatigue — had been seized at Lyons by means of Comte Dortan, who had received information from the chapter of our having absconded with it. In vain did Le Maître lay claim to his property, his means of existence, the labour of his life: his right to the music in question was at least subject to litigation, but even that liberty was not allowed him, the affair being instantly decided by the law of the stronger. Thus poor Le Maître lost the fruit of his talents, the labour of his youth, and the resource of his old age.

Nothing was wanting to render the news I had received truly afflicting, but I was at an age when great calamities can be sustained; accordingly I soon found consolation. I expected shortly to hear news of Madame de Warens, though I was ignorant of her address, and she knew nothing of my return. As to my desertion of Le Maître, all things considered, I did not find it so very culpable. I had been serviceable to him in his retreat; it was not in my power to give him any further assistance. Had I remained with him in France, it would not have cured his complaint; I could not have saved his music, and should

only have doubled his expense. In this point of view I then saw my conduct; I see it otherwise now. A villainous action does not torment us at the instant we commit it, but on recollection, and sometimes even after a number of years have elapsed, for the remembrance is not to be extinguished.

The only means I had to obtain news of Mamma was to remain where I was. Where should I seek her at Paris, or how bear the expense of such a journey? Sooner or later, there was no place where I could be so certain to hear of her as at Annecy; this consideration determined me to remain there, though my conduct was but indifferent. I did not go to the bishop who had already befriended me, and might continue to do so: my patroness was not present, and I feared his reprimands on the subject of our flight. Neither did I go to the seminary; Monsieur Gros was no longer there; in short, I went to none of my acquaintance. I would gladly have visited Madame l'Intendante, but did not dare. I did worse; I sought out Monsieur Venture, whom, notwithstanding my enthusiasm, I had never thought of since my departure. I found him quite gay, in high spirits, and the universal favourite in Annecy; the ladies besieged him. This success completed my infatuation. I saw nothing but Monsieur Venture; he almost made me forget Madame de Warens. That I might profit more at ease by his instructions and example, I proposed to share his lodging, to which he readily consented. It was at a shoemaker's — a pleasant, jovial fellow, who, in his country dialect, called his wife nothing but *salopière*, an appellation which she certainly merited. Venture took care to augment their differences, though under an appearance of doing the direct contrary, throwing out in a distant manner, and provincial accent, hints that produced the utmost effect, and furnished such scenes as were sufficient to make

one die with laughter. Thus the mornings passed without our thinking of them; at two or three o'clock we took some refreshment. Venture then went to his various engagements, where he supped, while I walked alone, meditating on his great merit, coveting and admiring his rare talents, and cursing my own unlucky stars, that did not call me to so happy a life. How little did I then know of myself! Mine had been a hundred times more delightful, had I not been so great a fool, or known better how to enjoy it.

Madame de Warens had taken no one with her but Anet; Merceret, her chambermaid, whom I have before mentioned, still remained in her mistress's rooms. Merceret was something older than myself, not pretty, but tolerably agreeable; a good-natured Fribourgeoise, free from malice, having no fault to my knowledge but being a little refractory with her mistress. I often went to see her; she was an old acquaintance, who recalled to my remembrance one more beloved, and this made her dear to me. She had several friends, and among others one Mademoiselle Giraud, a Genevese, who, for my sins, took it into her head to have an inclination for me, always pressing Merceret, when she returned her visits, to bring me with her. As I liked Merceret, I felt no disinclination to accompany her; besides, I met there with other young people whose company pleased me. As for Mademoiselle Giraud, who offered every kind of enticement, nothing could increase the aversion I had for her. When she drew near me, with her dried black snout, smeared with Spanish snuff, I could hardly refrain from expectorating, but, being pleased with her visitors, I took patience. Among these were two girls who, to pay their court either to Mademoiselle Giraud or myself, strove to make much of me. I conceived this to be only friendship, but have since thought it depended only on

myself to have discovered something more, though I did not even suspect it at the time.

Besides, seamstresses, chambermaids, or milliners never tempted me; I sighed for ladies! Every one has his peculiar taste; this has ever been mine, being in this particular of a different opinion from Horace.[1] Yet it is not vanity of riches or rank that attracts me: it is a well-preserved complexion, fine hands, elegance of ornament, an air of delicacy and neatness throughout the whole person: higher taste in the manner of attiring and expressing themselves, a finer or better-made gown, small feet handsomely shod, ribbons, lace, and well-dressed hair; I even prefer those who have less natural beauty, provided they are elegantly decorated. I freely confess this preference is very ridiculous, yet my heart gives in to it spite of my understanding.

Well, even this advantage presented itself, and it only depended on my own resolution to have seized the opportunity. How do I love, from time to time, to return to those moments of my youth, which were so charmingly delightful; so short, so scarce, and enjoyed at so cheap a rate! how fondly do I wish to dwell on them! Even yet the remembrance of these scenes warms my heart with a chaste rapture, which appears necessary to reanimate my drooping courage and enable me to sustain the weariness of my latter days.

The appearance of Aurora seemed so delightful one morning that, putting on my clothes, I hastened into the country to see the rising of the sun. I enjoyed that pleasure in its utmost extent. It was one week after midsummer; the earth had put on its best array, and was covered with verdure and flowers; and the nightingales, whose soft warblings were almost concluded, seemed to vie with each other, and in concert with birds of various

[1] *Satires*, Book I. 2. See also Montaigne's *Essays*, Book III. ch. 3.

kinds to bid adieu to spring, and hail the approach of a beautiful summer's day — one of those lovely days that are no longer to be enjoyed at my present age, and which have never been seen on the melancholy soil I now inhabit.[1]

I had rambled insensibly to a considerable distance from the town. The heat augmenting, I was walking in the shade along a valley by the side of a brook, when I heard behind me the steps of horses and the voices of some females who, though they seemed embarrassed, did not laugh the less heartily on that account. I turn round, hear myself called by name, and approaching, find two young people of my acquaintance, Mademoiselle de Graffenried and Mademoiselle Galley, who, not being very excellent horsewomen, could not make their horses cross the rivulet. Mademoiselle de Graffenried was a young lady of Berne, very amiable, who, having been sent from that country for some youthful folly, had imitated Madame de Warens, at whose house I had sometimes seen her, but not having, like her, a pension, she had gladly attached herself to Mademoiselle Galley, who had prevailed on her mother to engage her young friend as a companion till she could be otherwise provided for. Mademoiselle Galley was one year younger than her friend, prettier, more delicate, more refined, and, to complete all, slender, yet well formed — the most interesting period of girlhood. They loved each other tenderly, and the good disposition of both could not fail to render their union durable, if some lover did not derange it. They informed me they were going to Toune, an old château belonging to Madame Galley, and implored my assistance to make their horses cross the stream, not being able to compass it themselves. I would have given each a cut or two with the whip, but they feared I might be kicked

[1] Wootton, in Staffordshire.

and themselves thrown. I therefore had recourse to another expedient. I took hold of Mademoiselle Galley's horse and led him through the brook, the water reaching half-way up my legs. The other followed without any difficulty. This done, I would have paid my compliments to the ladies, and walked off like a great booby as I was, but after whispering to each other, Mademoiselle de Graffenried said, 'No, no; you must not think to escape us thus; you have got wet in our service, and we must in conscience see that you are properly dried. If you please, you must go with us; you are now our prisoner.' My heart began to beat. I looked at Mademoiselle Galley. 'Yes, yes,' added she, laughing at my fearful look, 'our prisoner of war; come, get up behind her; we shall give a good account of you.' 'But, mademoiselle,' continued I, 'I have not the honour to be acquainted with your mother; what will she say on my arrival?' 'Her mother,' replied Mademoiselle de Graffenried, 'is not at Toune. We are alone; we shall return at night, and you shall come back with us.'

The stroke of electricity has not a more instantaneous effect than these words produced on me. Leaping up behind Mademoiselle de Graffenried, I trembled with joy, and when it became necessary to clasp her in order to hold myself on, my heart beat so violently that she perceived it, and told me hers beat also from a fear of falling. In my present posture this was almost an invitation to verify her assertion, yet I did not dare; and during the whole way my arms served as a girdle — a very close one, I must confess — without being for a moment displaced. Some women who read this would be for giving me a box on the ear, and, truly, I deserved it.

The gaiety of the journey and the chat of those girls so enlivened me that, during the whole time we passed together, we never ceased talking for a moment. They

had set me so thoroughly at ease that my tongue spoke as fast as my eyes, though not exactly the same things. Some minutes, indeed, when I was left alone with either, the conversation became a little embarrassed, but neither of them was absent long enough to allow time for explaining the cause.

Arrived at Toune, and myself well dried, we breakfasted together, after which it was necessary to settle the important business of preparing dinner. The young ladies cooked, kissing from time to time the farmer's children, while the poor scullion looked on with vexation. Provisions had been sent for from town, and there was everything necessary for a good dinner, but unhappily they had forgotten wine. This forgetfulness was by no means astonishing in girls who seldom drank any, but I was sorry for the omission, as I had reckoned on its help, thinking it might add to my confidence. They were sorry likewise, and perhaps from the same motive; though I have no reason to say this, for their lively and charming gaiety was innocence itself; besides, there were two of them — what could they expect from me? They sent everywhere about the neighbourhood to seek for wine, but none could be procured, so poor and sober are the peasants in those parts. As they were expressing their concern, I begged them not to give themselves any uneasiness on my account, for while with them I had no occasion for wine to intoxicate me. This was the only gallantry I ventured at during the whole of the day, and I believe the sly rogues saw well enough that I said nothing but the truth.

We dined in the farm kitchen. The two friends were seated on the benches, one on each side the long table, and their guest at the end, between them, on a three-legged stool. What a dinner! how charming the remembrance! While we can enjoy, at so small an expense,

such pure, such true delights, why should we be solicitous for others? Never did supper at one of the *petites maisons* of Paris equal this; I do not only say for real pleasure and gaiety, but even for sensuality.

After dinner we were economical; instead of drinking the coffee we had reserved at breakfast, we kept it for an afternoon collation, with cream and some cakes which they had brought with them, and to keep our appetites in play we went into the orchard, meaning to finish our dessert with cherries. I got into a tree, throwing them down bunches, from which they returned the stones through the branches. Once Mademoiselle Galley, holding out her apron and drawing back her head, stood so fair, and I took such good aim, that I dropped a bunch into her bosom. On her laughing, I said to myself, 'Why are not my lips cherries? how gladly would I throw them there likewise!'

Thus the day passed with the greatest freedom, yet with the utmost decency; not a single equivocal word, not one attempt at double-meaning pleasantry; yet this delicacy was not affected, we only performed the parts our hearts dictated; in short, my modesty, some will say my folly, was such that the greatest familiarity that escaped me was once kissing the hand of Mademoiselle Galley. It is true, the attending circumstances helped to stamp a value on this trifling favour: we were alone, I was embarrassed, her eyes were fixed on the ground, and my lips, instead of uttering words, were pressed to her hand, which she drew gently back after the salute, without any appearance of displeasure. I know not what I should have said to her; her friend entered, and at that moment seemed ugly.

At length they bethought themselves that they must return to town before night; even now we had but just time to reach it by daylight, and we hastened our depar-

ture in the same order as we came. Had I pleased myself, I should certainly have reversed this order, for the glance of Mademoiselle Galley had reached my heart; but I dared not mention it, and the proposal could not reasonably come from her. On the way we expressed our sorrow that the day was over; but far from complaining of the shortness of its duration, we were conscious of having prolonged it by every possible amusement.

I quitted them almost at the very spot where they had taken me up. With what regret did we part! With what pleasure did we form projects to renew our meeting! A dozen hours thus passed together were worth ages of familiarity. The sweet remembrance of this day cost those amiable girls nothing; the tender union which reigned among us equalled more lively pleasures, with which it could not have co-existed. We loved each other without shame or mystery, and thus we wished to continue our affection. There is a species of enjoyment connected with innocence of manners which is superior to any other, because it has no interval or interruption; for myself, the remembrance of such a day touches me nearer, delights me more, and returns with greater rapture to my heart, than any other pleasures I ever tasted. I hardly know what my own feelings were respecting those charming girls. I do not say that, had the arrangement been in my power, I should have divided my heart between them; I felt some degree of preference. I should have been happy to have Mademoiselle de Graffenried for a mistress; yet I think, by choice, I should have liked her better as a confidant. Be that as it may, I felt on leaving them as though I could not live without either. Who would have thought that I should never see them more, and that here must end our ephemeral amours?

Those who read this will not fail to laugh at my gal-

lantries, and remark, that after very promising preliminaries, my utmost advances concluded by a kiss of the hand. Yet be not mistaken, reader: I have, perhaps, tasted more real pleasure in my amours which concluded by a kiss of the hand, than you will ever have in yours, which, at the very least, begin there.

Venture, who had gone to bed late the night before, came in soon after me. I did not now see him with my usual satisfaction, and took care not to inform him how I had passed the day. The ladies had spoken of him slightingly, and appeared discontented at finding me in such bad hands. This hurt him in my esteem; besides, whatever diverted my ideas from them was at this time disagreeable. However, he soon brought me back to myself by speaking of the situation of my affairs, which was too critical to last; for, though I spent very little, my slender finances were almost exhausted. I was without resource; no news of Mamma; I knew not what would become of me, and felt a cruel pang at heart to see the friend of Mademoiselle Galley reduced to beggary.

Venture informed me that he had spoken of me to Monsieur le Juge-mage, and would take me next day to dine with him; that he was a man who by means of his friends might render me essential service. In other respects he was a desirable acquaintance, being a man of wit and letters, of agreeable conversation, one who possessed talents and loved them in others. Then, mingling, as was his wont, the most serious concerns with the most trifling frivolity, he showed me a pretty couplet, which had come from Paris, on an air in one of Mouret's operas, which was then being played. Monsieur Simon, the Juge-mage, was so pleased with this couplet that he desired to make another in answer to it on the same air. He had asked Venture to write another, and the latter would have me to make a third, that, as he expressed it, they

might see couplets start up next day like the *brancards* in the *Roman Comique*.[1]

In the night, not being able to sleep, I composed a couplet, my first essay in poetry. It was passable; better, or at least composed with more taste, than it would have been the preceding night, the subject turning upon a very tender incident, to which my heart was now entirely disposed. In the morning I showed my performance to Venture, who, being pleased with the couplet, put it in his pocket, without informing me whether he had made his. We dined with Monsieur Simon, who treated us very politely. The conversation was agreeable; indeed, it could not be otherwise between two men of natural intelligence, improved by reading. For me, I acted my proper part, which was to listen in silence. Neither of them mentioned the couplet; neither did I, nor do I know that mine was ever alluded to.

Monsieur Simon appeared satisfied with my behaviour; indeed, it was almost all that he saw of me in this interview. We had often met at Madame de Warens', but he had never paid much attention to me. It is from this dinner, therefore, that I date our acquaintance, which, though of no service in regard to the object I then had in view, was afterwards productive of advantages which make me recollect it with pleasure.

I should be wrong not to give some account of his person, since, from his office of magistrate, and the reputation of wit on which he piqued himself, no idea could otherwise be formed of it. Monsieur le Juge-mage Simon was certainly not three feet high; his legs, spare, straight, and tolerably long, would have added something to his stature had they been vertical, but they stood in the direction of an open pair of compasses. His body was not only short, but thin, being in every respect of most

[1] Part I. chap. ix.

inconceivable smallness — when naked he must have appeared like a grasshopper. His head was of the common size, to which appertained a well-formed face, a noble look, and tolerably fine eyes; in short, it appeared a borrowed head, stuck on a miserable stump. He might very well have dispensed with dress, for his large wig alone covered him from head to foot.

He had two voices, perfectly different, which intermingled perpetually in his conversation, forming at first a diverting, but afterwards a very disagreeable, contrast. One, grave and sonorous, was, if I may hazard the expression, the voice of his head; the other, clear, sharp, and piercing, the voice of his body. When he paid particular attention, and spoke leisurely, so as to control his breath, he could continue his deep tone; but if he were the least animated, or attempted a lively accent, his voice sounded like the whistling of a key, and it was with the utmost difficulty that he could return to the bass.

With the figure I have just described, and which is by no means caricatured, Monsieur Simon was gallant, ever entertaining the ladies with soft tales, and carrying the decoration of his person even to foppery. Willing to make use of every advantage, he often, during the morning, gave audience in bed; for, when a handsome head was discovered on the pillow, no one could have imagined that there was little else. This circumstance gave birth to scenes which I am certain are yet remembered by all Annecy.

One morning, when he expected to give audience in bed, or rather on the bed, wearing a handsome night-cap ornamented with two large knots of rose-coloured ribbon, a countryman arriving knocked at the door. The maid happened to be out; Monsieur le Juge-mage, therefore, hearing the knock repeated, cried, 'Come in,' and as he

Cont. 4 pages from here.

mistress for some time, she thought of returning to Fribourg, and the persuasions of La Giraud determined her; nay, more, she intimated that it was proper that some one should conduct her to her father's, and proposed me. As I happened to be agreeable to little Merceret, she approved the idea, and the same day they mentioned it to me as a settled affair. Finding nothing displeasing in this way of disposing of me, I consented, thinking it could not be above a week's journey at most; but La Giraud, who had arranged the whole affair, thought otherwise. It was necessary to avow the state of my finances; provision was made accordingly, La Merceret undertaking to defray my expenses; but, to retrench on one hand what was expended on the other, I advised that her little baggage should be sent on before, and that we should proceed by easy journeys on foot. So the matter was concluded.

I am sorry to have so many girls in love with me; but, as there is nothing to be very vain of in the success of these amours, I think I may tell the truth without scruple. La Merceret, younger and less artful than La Giraud, never made me so many advances, but she imitated my manners, my accents, repeated my words, and showed me all those little attentions that I ought to have paid to her. Being very timorous, she took great care that we should both sleep in the same chamber, a circumstance that usually produces some consequences between a lad of twenty and a girl of twenty-five.

For once, however, it went no further; my simplicity being such that, though La Merceret was by no means a disagreeable girl, not the smallest temptation or even idea of gallantry ever entered my head, and even if it had, I was too great a novice to have profited by it. I could not imagine how two young persons could bring themselves to sleep together, thinking that such famili-

his conversation was both amusing and instructive. When I afterwards took a taste for study, I cultivated his acquaintance, and found my account in it. When at Chambéri, I sometimes went from thence to see him. His praise increased my emulation, to which he added some good advice respecting the prosecution of my studies, which I found useful. Unhappily, this weakly body contained a very feeling soul. Some years after, he was chagrined by I know not what unlucky affair, but it cost him his life. This was really unfortunate, for he was a good little man, whom at first acquaintance one laughed at, but afterwards loved. Though our situations in life were very little allied with each other, yet, as I received some useful lessons from him, I thought gratitude demanded that I should dedicate a few sentences to his memory.

As soon as I found myself at liberty, I ran into the street where Mademoiselle Galley lived, flattering myself that I should see some one go in or out, or at least open a window; but I was mistaken — not even a cat appeared, the house remaining as close all the time as if it had been uninhabited. The street was small and lonely; any one loitering there was likely to be noticed; and from time to time people of the neighbourhood passed in and out. I was much embarrassed thinking my person might be known, and the cause that brought me there conjectured; this idea tortured me, for I have ever preferred the honour and happiness of those I love to my own pleasures.

At length, weary of playing the Spanish lover, and having no guitar, I determined to write to Mademoiselle de Graffenried. I should have preferred writing to her friend, but did not dare to take that liberty, as it appeared more proper to begin with her to whom I owed the acquaintance, and with whom I was more familiar. Hav-

ing written my letter, I took it to Mademoiselle Giraud, as the young ladies had agreed at parting, they having furnished me with this expedient. Mademoiselle Giraud was a quilter, and sometimes worked at Madame Galley's, which procured her free admission to the house. I must confess I was not thoroughly satisfied with this choice of a messenger, but was cautious of starting difficulties, fearing that if I objected to her no other might be named, and it was impossible to intimate that she had an inclination toward me herself. I even felt humiliated that she should think that I could imagine her to be of the same sex as those young ladies; in a word, I accepted her agency rather than none, and availed myself of it at all events.

At the very first word, La Giraud discovered me. I must own that this was not a difficult matter, for, if sending a letter to young girls had not spoken for itself, my foolish embarrassed air would have betrayed me. It will easily be supposed that the employment gave her little satisfaction; she undertook it, however, and performed it faithfully. The next morning I ran to her house, and found an answer ready for me. How did I hurry away that I might have an opportunity to read and kiss it alone! though this need not be told, but the plan adopted by Mademoiselle Giraud, and in which I found more delicacy and moderation than I had expected, should. She had sense enough to conclude, that her thirty-seven years, hare's eyes, bedaubed nose, shrill voice, and blackish skin stood no chance against two elegant young girls, in all the height and bloom of beauty; she resolved, therefore, neither to betray nor assist them, choosing rather to lose me entirely than to entertain me for them.

[1732.] As La Merceret had not heard from her

spoke rather loud, it was in his acute tone. The man entered, looked about, endeavouring to discover whence the female voice proceeded, and at length, seeing a handsome head-dress set off with ribbons, was about to leave the room, making the supposed lady a hundred apologies. Monsieur Simon, in a rage, screamed the more shrilly; and the countryman, confirmed in his opinion, and conceiving himself to be insulted, began railing in his turn, saying that apparently she was nothing better than a common street-walker, and that Monsieur le Juge-mage should be ashamed of setting such ill examples. The enraged magistrate having no other weapon than the chamber-vessel, was just going to throw it at the poor fellow's head as his servant returned.

This dwarf, ill-used by nature as to his person, was recompensed by possessing an understanding naturally agreeable, which he had been careful to cultivate. Though he was esteemed a good lawyer, he did not like his profession, delighting more in the finer parts of literature, which he studied with success; above all, he had caught thence that superficial brilliancy, the art of pleasing in conversation, even with the ladies. He knew by heart all the little witticisms of the 'Ana,' and others of the like kind, which he well knew how to make the most of, relating with an air of secrecy, and as an anecdote of yesterday, what had happened sixty years before. He understood music, and could sing agreeably in his masculine voice; in short, for a magistrate, he had many pleasing talents. By flattering the ladies of Annecy, he became fashionable among them; he appeared like a little monkey in their train. He even pretended to favours, at which they were much amused. One Madame d'Epagny used to say that the utmost favour he could aspire to was to kiss a lady's knee.

As he was well read, and spoke fluently on literature,

arity must require ages of preparation. If poor Merceret paid my expenses in hopes of any equivalent, she was sadly cheated, for we arrived at Fribourg exactly as we had quitted Annecy.

I passed through Geneva without visiting any one, but while going over the bridges I found myself deeply affected. Never could I see the walls of that fortunate city, never could I enter it, without feeling my heart sink from excess of tenderness. At the same time that the image of liberty elevated my soul, the ideas of equality, union, and gentleness of manners touched me even to tears, and inspired me with a lively regret at having forfeited all these advantages. What an error was I in — but yet how natural! I imagined I saw all this in my native country, because I bore it in my heart.

It was necessary to pass through Nyon: could I do this without seeing my good father? Had I resolved on doing so, I must afterwards have died with regret. I left La Merceret at the inn, and ventured to his house. How wrong was I to fear him! On seeing me, his soul gave way to the paternal tenderness with which it was filled. What tears were mingled with our embraces! He thought I was returned to him. I related my history, and informed him of my resolution. He opposed it feebly, mentioning the dangers to which I exposed myself, and telling me the shortest follies were the best, but did not attempt to keep me by force, in which particular I think he acted rightly; but it is certain he did not do everything in his power to retain me, even by fair means, — whether, after the step I had taken, he thought I ought not to return, or was puzzled at my age to know what to do with me. I have since found that he conceived — though not unnaturally — a very unjust opinion of my travelling companion. My stepmother, a good woman, rather smooth-tongued, put on an appearance of wishing

me to stay for supper. I did not, however, comply, but told them I proposed remaining longer with them on my return, leaving as a deposit my little packet, that had come by water, and would have been an incumbrance had I taken it with me. I continued my journey the next morning, well satisfied that I had seen my father and had taken courage to do my duty.

We arrived without any accident at Fribourg. Towards the conclusion of the journey the politeness of Mademoiselle Merceret slightly diminished, and after our arrival she treated me even with coldness. Her father, who was certainly not in opulent circumstances, did not show me much attention, and I was obliged to lodge at a cabaret. I went to see them the next morning, and received an invitation to dine there, which I accepted. We separated without tears at night; I returned to my paltry lodging, and departed the second day after my arrival, almost without knowing whither to go.

This was again a circumstance of my life in which Providence offered me precisely what was necessary to make my days pass happily. La Merceret was a good girl, neither witty nor handsome, but yet not ugly; not very lively, but tolerably rational, except while under the influence of some little humours, which evaporated in tears, without any violent outbreak of temper. She had a real inclination for me; I might have married her without difficulty, and followed her father's business. My taste for music would have made me love her; I should have settled at Fribourg, a small town, not pretty, but inhabited by very worthy people. I should certainly have missed great pleasures, but should have lived in peace to my last hour, and I must be allowed to know best what I should have gained by such a step.

I did not return to Nyon, but to Lausanne, wishing to gratify myself with a view of that beautiful lake, which

is seen there in its utmost extent. The greater part of my secret motives for decision have had no more solid grounds. Distant expectation has rarely strength enough to influence my actions, the uncertainty of the future ever making me regard projects whose execution requires a length of time as deceitful lures. I lend myself to visionary scenes of hope as readily as others, provided they cost me nothing; but, if attended with any prolonged trouble, I have done with them. The smallest, the most trifling pleasure that is conveniently within my reach tempts me more than all the joys of paradise. I must except, however, those pleasures which are necessarily followed by pain. I only love those enjoyments which are unadulterated, which can never be the case where we are conscious that we are inviting an after-repentance.

It was necessary that I should arrive at some resting-place, and the nearest was best, for, having lost my way on the road, I found myself in the evening at Moudon, where I spent all that remained of my little stock except ten kreutzers, which served to purchase my next day's dinner. Arriving in the evening at a little village near Lausanne, I went into a cabaret, without a sou in my pocket to pay for my lodging, or knowing what would become of me. I found myself extremely hungry. Setting, therefore, a good face on the matter, I ordered supper as boldly as if I had had the means to pay for it, went to bed without thought, and slept with great composure. In the morning, having breakfasted and reckoned with my host, I offered to leave my waistcoat in pledge for seven batz, which was the amount of my expenses. The honest man refused this, saying that, thank Heaven, he had never stripped any one, and would not now begin for seven batz; adding that I should keep my waistcoat and pay him when I could. I was affected with this un-

expected kindness, but felt it less than I ought, or than I have since felt on the remembrance of it. I did not fail to send him his money, with thanks, by one I could depend upon. Fifteen years after, passing through Lausanne, on my return from Italy, I felt a sensible regret at having forgotten the name both of the landlord and the house. I wished to see him, and should have felt real pleasure in recalling to his memory that worthy action. Services doubtless much more important, but rendered with ostentation, have not appeared to me so worthy of gratitude as the simple, unaffected humanity of this honest man.

As I approached Lausanne, I thought of my distress, and the means of extricating myself, without letting my stepmother perceive that I was in want. I compared myself, in this walking pilgrimage, to my friend Venture on his arrival at Annecy, and was so warmed with the idea that, without recollecting that I had neither his polished manners nor his talents, I determined to act at Lausanne the part of a little Venture — to teach music, which I did not understand, and to say I came from Paris, where I had never been. In consequence of this noble project, as there was no establishment where I could obtain a minor post, and not choosing, indeed, to venture among professional people, I inquired for some little inn, where one could lodge comfortably and cheaply, and was directed to one Perrotet, who took in boarders. This Perrotet, who was one of the best men in the world, received me very kindly, and after having heard my feigned story, promised to speak of me, and endeavour to procure me scholars, saying he should not expect any money till I had earned it. His charge for board (five écus blancs), though moderate in itself, was a great deal to me; he advised me, therefore, to begin with half-board, which consisted of good soup only for dinner, but a plentiful

supper at night. I closed with this proposition, and poor Perrotet trusted me with great cheerfulness, sparing meantime no trouble in order to be useful to me.

Having found so many good people in my youth, why do I find so few in my age? Is their race extinct? No; but I do not seek them in the same situation as formerly, among the commonalty, where, violent passions predominating only at intervals, Nature speaks her genuine sentiments. In more elevated stations they are entirely smothered, and under the mask of sentiment, only interest or vanity is heard.

Having written to my father from Lausanne, he sent my packet and some excellent advice, of which I should have profited better. I have already observed that I have moments of inconceivable delirium, in which I am entirely out of myself. I am about to relate one of the most remarkable of these. To comprehend how completely my brain was turned, and to what degree I had 'Venturised' myself, if I may be allowed the expression, the many extravagances I ran into at the same time should be considered. Behold me, then, a singing-master, without knowing how to read the notation of a common song; for, if the five or six months passed with Le Maître had improved me, they could not be supposed sufficient to qualify me; besides, being taught by a master was enough to make me learn ill. Being a Parisian from Geneva, and a Catholic in a Protestant country, I thought I should change my name with my religion and country, still approaching as near as possible to the great model I had in view. He had called himself Venture de Villeneuve. I changed by anagram the name Rousseau into that of Vaussore, calling myself Vaussore de Villeneuve. Venture was a good composer, though he had not said so; I, without knowing anything of the art, boasted of my skill to every one, and, without ability to set down

the notes of a petty vaudeville, pretended to be a composer. This was not all: being presented to Monsieur de Treytorens, professor of law, who loved music, and who gave concerts at his house, nothing would do but I must give him a proof of my talents; and accordingly I set about composing a piece for his concerts as boldly as if I had understood the science. I had the constancy to work for a fortnight at this curious business, to copy it fair, write out the different parts, and distribute them with as much assurance as if it had been a masterpiece of harmony; in short — what will hardly be believed, though strictly true — I tacked to the end of it a very pretty minuet that was commonly played about the streets, and which many may remember from these words, so well known at that time: —

Quel caprice!
Quelle injustice!
Quoi! ta Clarice
Trahirait tes feux! etc.

Venture had taught me this air with the bass, set to other words of a lewd nature, by the help of which I had retained it: thus, at the end of my composition, I put this minuet and the bass, suppressing the words, and uttering it for my own as confidently as if I had been speaking to the inhabitants of the moon.

They assemble to perform my piece: I explain to each the movement, style of execution, and reference to his part — I was fully occupied. They were five or six minutes preparing, which were for me so many ages; at length, everything being ready, I take up a fine roll of paper with which I strike on the leader's desk the five or six strokes signifying 'Attention!' All are silent; I set myself gravely to the work of beating time; they begin. No, never since French operas existed was there such a

charivari! Whatever some might have thought of my pretensions to musical talent, the effect was far worse than could have been expected. The musicians tried to stifle their laughter; the auditors opened wide their eyes and would fain have closed their ears — but this was not possible. My brutal symphonists, who desired a little sport, scraped away with a din that might have split the ears of a *quinze-vingt*. I had the courage to continue, sweating profusely, it is true, yet restrained by shame, and not daring to flee and throw up my chance. For my consolation, I heard around me the company whispering in each other's ear, or rather in mine, 'This is insupportable!' another says, 'What outrageous music!' another, 'What a devilish caterwauling!' Poor Jean-Jacques, in this cruel moment you had no great hopes that there might come a day when, before the King of France and his whole Court, your tunes would excite whispers of surprise and applause, and that in every box around you the most amiable women would murmur softly, 'What delightful sounds! what enchanting music! These strains reach the very heart!'

The minuet, however, presently put all the company in good-humour; hardly was it begun before I heard bursts of laughter from all parts, every one congratulating me on my pretty taste in music, declaring this minuet would make me spoken of, and that I merited the loudest praise. It is not necessary to describe my uneasiness, or to own how much I deserved it.

Next day, one of the musicians, named Lutold, came to see me, and was kind enough not to congratulate me on my success. The profound conviction of my folly, shame, regret, and the state of despair to which I was reduced, with the impossibility of concealing the cruel agitation of my heart, made me open it to him: suffering, therefore, my tears to flow freely, not content

with owning my ignorance, I told all, conjuring him to secrecy; he kept his word, as every one may suppose. The same evening all Lausanne knew who I was, but, what is more remarkable, no one seemed to know, not even the good Perrotet, who, notwithstanding what had happened, continued to lodge and board me.

I led a melancholy life here; the consequences of such an essay had not rendered Lausanne a very agreeable residence. Scholars did not present themselves in crowds, not a single female, and no person of the city. I had only two or three big Germans, as stupid as I was ignorant, who fatigued me to death, and in my hands did not become very fine artists. At length I was sent for to a house, where a little serpent of a girl amused herself by showing me a parcel of music of which I could not read a note, and which she had the malice to sing before her master, to teach him how it should be executed; for I was so little able to read an air at first sight that in the charming concert I have just described I could not possibly follow the execution for a moment, or know whether they played truly what lay before me, and I myself had composed.

In the midst of so many humiliating circumstances, I had the pleasing consolation, from time to time, of receiving letters from my two charming friends. I have ever found the utmost consolatory virtue in the fair sex; when in disgrace, nothing softens my affliction more than to be sensible that an amiable woman is interested for me. This correspondence ceased, however, soon after, and was never renewed: indeed, it was my own fault, for in changing situations I neglected sending my address, and, forced by necessity to think perpetually of myself, I soon forgot them.

It is a long time since I mentioned poor Mamma, but it would be a great mistake to suppose that I had forgotten her too; never was she a moment absent from my

thoughts. I anxiously wished to find her, not merely because she was necessary to my subsistence, but because she was infinitely more necessary to my heart. My attachment to her, though lively and tender, as it really was, did not prevent my loving others, but then it was not in the same manner. All equally claimed my tenderness for their charms; but it was those charms alone I loved, my passion would not have survived them; while Mamma might have become old or ugly without my loving her the less tenderly. My heart had entirely transmitted to herself the homage it first paid to her beauty, and whatever change she might experience, while she remained herself my sentiments could not change. I was sensible how much gratitude I owed to her, but in truth I never thought of it, and whether she served me or not, it would ever have been the same thing. I loved her neither from duty, interest, nor convenience; I loved her because I was born to love her. During my attachment to another, I own this affection was in some measure deranged; I did not think so frequently of her, yet still with the same pleasure; and never, in love or otherwise, did I think of her without feeling that I could expect no true happiness in life while separated from her.

Though in so long a time I had received no news from her, I never imagined I had entirely lost her, or that she could have forgotten me. I said to myself, She will know sooner or later that I am wandering about, and will let me know that she is living: I am certain I shall find her. In the meantime, it was a pleasure to live in her native country, to walk in the streets where she had walked, and before the houses that she had lived in; yet all this was the work of conjecture, for one of my foolish peculiarities was not daring to inquire after her, or even pronounce her name without the most absolute necessity. It seemed in speaking of her that I declared all I felt,

that my lips revealed the secrets of my heart, and in some degree compromised her. I believe fear was likewise mingled with this idea; I dreaded to hear ill of her. The step she had taken had been much spoken of, and something of her conduct in other respects; fearing, therefore, that aught might be said which I did not wish to hear, I preferred to hear nothing.

As my scholars did not take up much of my time, and the town where she was born was not above four leagues from Lausanne, I made it a walk of two or three days, during which time a most pleasant emotion never left me. A view of the Lake of Geneva and its admirable shore had ever, in my idea, a particular attraction which I cannot describe — not arising merely from the beauty of the prospect, but something else, I know not what, more interesting, which affects and softens me. Every time I approach the Vaudois country I experience an impression composed of the remembrance of Madame de Warens, who was born there; of my father, who lived there; of Mademoiselle de Vulson, who was my first love, and of several pleasant journeys I made there in my childhood, mingled with some nameless charm, more powerfully attractive than all the rest. When that ardent desire for a life of happiness and tranquillity, which ever flees from me, and for which I was born, inflames my mind, 'tis ever to the country of Vaud, near the lake, in those charming plains, that imagination leads me. An orchard on the banks of that lake, and no other, is absolutely necessary; a firm friend, an amiable woman, a cow, and a little boat; nor could I enjoy perfect happiness on earth without all these. I laugh at the simplicity with which I have several times gone into that country for the sole purpose of seeking this imaginary happiness. I was ever surprised to find the inhabitants, particularly the women, of a disposition quite different

from what I sought. How contradictory did this appear to me! The country and the people who inhabit it were never, in my idea, formed for each other.

Walking along these beautiful banks, on my way to Vévay, I gave myself up to the softest melancholy: my heart rushed with ardour into a thousand innocent felicities; melting to tenderness, I sighed and wept like a child. How often, stopping to weep more at my ease, and seated on a large stone, did I amuse myself with seeing my tears drop into the water!

On my arrival at Vévay I lodged at the Clef, and during the two days I remained there, without any acquaintance, conceived a love for that town, which has followed me through all my travels, and was finally the cause that I placed in this spot the residence of the hero and heroines of my romance. I would say to any one who has taste and feeling, Go to Vévay, visit the surrounding country, examine the prospects, go on the lake, and then say whether nature has not designed this country for a Julie, a Claire, and a Saint-Preux; but do not seek them there. I now return to my story.

Being a Catholic, and avowing myself to be one, I followed without mystery or scruple the religion I had embraced. On Sunday, if the weather was fine, I went to hear mass at Assens, a place two leagues distant from Lausanne, and generally in company with other Catholics, particularly a Parisian embroiderer, whose name I have forgotten. Not such a Parisian as myself, but a Parisian of Paris, an arch-Parisian from his Maker, yet good-natured as a Champenois. He loved his country so well that he would not doubt my being his countryman, for fear he should not have so much occasion to speak of it. The Lieutenant-baillival, Monsieur de Crouzas, had a gardener, who was likewise from Paris, but not so complaisant; he thought the glory of his country

concerned when any one claimed that honour who was not really entitled to it. He put questions to me, therefore, with an air and tone as if certain to detect me in a falsehood, and once, smiling malignantly, asked me what was remarkable in the Marché-Neuf. It may be supposed I evaded the question; but I have since passed twenty years at Paris, and certainly should know that city; yet, were the same question repeated at this day, I should be equally embarrassed to answer it, and from this embarrassment it might be concluded I had never been there: thus, even when we meet with truths, we are subject to build our opinions on false principles.

I formed no ideas, while at Lausanne, that were worth recollecting, nor can I say exactly how long I remained there; I only know that, not finding sufficient to subsist on, I went from thence to Neufchâtel, where I passed the winter. Here I succeeded better: I got some scholars, and saved enough to pay my good friend Perrotet, who had faithfully sent my baggage, though at that time I was considerably in his debt.

By continuing to teach music I insensibly gained some knowledge of it. The life I led was sufficiently agreeable, and any reasonable man might have been satisfied, but my unsettled heart demanded something more. On Sundays, or whenever I had leisure, I wandered, sighing and thoughtful, about the adjoining fields and woods, and when once out of the city, never returned before night. One day being at Boudry, I went to dine at a cabaret, where I saw a man with a long beard, dressed in a violet-coloured Greek habit, with a fur cap, and whose air and manner were rather noble. This person found some difficulty in making himself understood, speaking only an unintelligible jargon, which bore more resemblance to Italian than any other language. I understood almost all he said, and I was the only person

present who could do so, for he was obliged to make his requests known to the landlord and others about him by signs. On my speaking a few words in Italian, which he perfectly understood, he got up and embraced me with rapture; a connection was soon formed, and from that moment I became his interpreter. His dinner was excellent, mine rather worse than indifferent; he gave me an invitation to dine with him, which I accepted without much ceremony. Drinking and chatting soon rendered us familiar, and by the end of the repast we had become inseparable. He informed me that he was a Greek prelate, and Archimandrite of Jerusalem; that he had undertaken to collect funds in Europe for the repairing of the Holy Sepulchre, and showed me some very fine patents from the Czarina, the Emperor, and several other sovereigns. He was tolerably content with what he had collected hitherto, though he had experienced inconceivable difficulties in Germany; for, not understanding a word of German, Latin, or French, he had been obliged to have recourse to his Greek, Turkish, and Lingua Franca, which did not procure him much in the country he was travelling through; his proposal, therefore, to me was that I should accompany him in the quality of secretary and interpreter. In spite of my violet-coloured coat, which accorded well enough with the proposed employment, he guessed from my ill-furnished appearance that I should easily be gained; and he was not mistaken. The bargain was soon made; I demanded nothing, and he promised liberally. Without security, without bond, without acquaintance, I give myself up to his guidance, and next morning behold me on my way to Jerusalem.

We began our expedition rather unsuccessfully by the canton of Fribourg. Episcopal dignity would not suffer him to play the beggar, or solicit help from private indi-

viduals; but we presented his commission to the Senate, who gave him a trifling sum. From thence we went to Berne, where we lodged at the Faucon, then a good inn, and frequented by respectable company, the public table being well supplied and numerously attended. I had fared indifferently so long that I was glad to make myself amends, therefore took care to profit by the present occasion. Monseigneur l'Archimandrite was himself an excellent companion, loved good cheer, was gay, spoke well for those who understood him, and knew perfectly well how to make the most of his Greek erudition. One day, at dessert, while cracking nuts, he cut his finger pretty deeply, and as it bled freely showed it to the company, saying with a laugh, 'Mirate, signori; questo è sangue Pelasgo.'

At Berne I was not useless to him, nor was my performance so bad as I had feared; I certainly spoke better and with more confidence than I could have done for myself. Matters were not conducted here with the same simplicity as at Fribourg; long and frequent conferences were necessary with the chiefs of the State, and the examination of his titles was not the work of a day; at length, everything being adjusted, he was admitted to an audience by the Senate: I entered with him as interpreter, and was ordered to speak. Nothing was further from my expectation, for it never entered my mind that, after such long and frequent conferences with the members, it was necessary to address the assembly collectively, as if nothing had been said. Judge my embarrassment!—a man so bashful, to speak, not only in public, but before the Senate of Berne! to speak impromptu, without a single moment for recollection; it was enough to annihilate me. I was not even intimidated. I described succinctly and clearly the commission of the Archimandrite; extolled the piety of those princes who had contributed,

and, to heighten that of their excellencies by emulation, added that less could not be expected from their well-known munificence; then, endeavouring to prove that this good work was equally interesting to all Christians, without distinction of sect, I concluded by promising the benediction of Heaven to all those who took part in it. I will not say that my discourse was the cause of our success, but it was certainly well received; and, on our quitting, the Archimandrite was gratified by a considerable present, to which were added some very handsome compliments on the intelligence of his secretary; these I had the agreeable office of interpreting, but could not take courage to render literally. This was the only time in my life that I spoke in public, and before a sovereign; and the only time, perhaps, that I spoke boldly and well. What difference in the disposition of the same person! Three years ago, having been to see my old friend, Monsieur Roguin, at Yverdun, I received a deputation to thank me for some books I had presented to the library of that city. The Swiss are great speakers; these gentlemen, accordingly, made me a long harangue, which I thought myself obliged to answer, but so embarrassed myself in the attempt that my head became confused, I stopped short, and was laughed at. Though naturally timid, I have sometimes acted with confidence in my youth, but never in my advanced age: the more I have seen of the world, the less I have been able to adopt its manners.

On leaving Berne we went to Soleure; the Archimandrite designing to re-enter Germany, and return through Hungary or Poland to his own country. This would have been a prodigious tour; but as the contents of his purse rather increased than diminished during his journey, he was in no haste to return. For me, who was almost as much pleased on horseback as on foot, I would

have desired no better fate than to travel thus during my whole life; but it was pre-ordained that my journey should be shorter.

The first thing we did after our arrival at Soleure was to pay our respects to the French Ambassador there. Unfortunately for my Bishop, this chanced to be the Marquis de Bonac, who had been Ambassador at the Porte, and consequently was acquainted with every particular relative to the Holy Sepulchre. The Archimandrite had an audience that lasted about a quarter of an hour, to which I was not admitted, as the Ambassador understood the Lingua Franca, and spoke Italian at least as well as myself. On my Greek's departure I prepared to follow him, but was detained. It was now my turn. Having called myself a Parisian, as such I was under the jurisdiction of his excellency: he therefore asked me who I was, exhorting me to tell the truth. This I promised to do, but entreated a private audience, which was immediately granted. The Ambassador took me to his closet, and shut the door; there, throwing myself at his feet, I kept my word; nor should I have said less had I promised nothing, for a continual wish to unbosom myself puts my heart perpetually upon my lips. After having disclosed myself without reserve to the musician Lutold, I was not disposed to act the mysterious with the Marquis de Bonac, who was so well pleased with my little history, and the ingenuousness with which I had related it, that he led me by the hand to the Ambassadress, and presented me, with an abridgment of my recital. Madame de Bonac received me kindly, saying that I must not be suffered to follow that Greek monk. It was accordingly resolved that I should remain at their hotel till they saw what could be done for me. I wished to bid adieu to my poor Archimandrite, for whom I had conceived an attachment, but was not permitted. They sent him word that

I was to be detained there, and in a quarter of an hour I saw my little bundle arrive. Monsieur de La Martinière, secretary to the embassy, had in a manner the care of me. While following him to the chamber assigned to my use, he said, 'This apartment was occupied under the Comte du Luc by a celebrated man of the same name as yourself; it is for you to succeed him in every respect, and cause it to be said hereafter, "Rousseau the First, Rousseau the Second."' This similarity, which I did not then expect, would have been less flattering to my wishes could I have foreseen at what price I should one day purchase the distinction.

What Monsieur de La Martinière had said excited my curiosity; I read the works of the person whose chamber I occupied, and on the strength of the compliment that had been paid me — imagining I had a taste for poetry — made my first essay in a cantata in praise of Madame de Bonac. This inclination was not permanent, though from time to time I have composed indifferent verses. I think it is a good exercise to teach elegant turns of expression, and to improve a prose style, but could never find attractions enough in French poetry to give myself wholly to it.

Monsieur de La Martinière wished to see my style, and asked me to write the detail I had before made to the Ambassador; accordingly I wrote him a long letter, which I have since been informed was preserved by Monsieur de Marianne, who had been long attached to the Marquis de Bonac, and has since succeeded Monsieur de La Martinière as secretary to the embassy of Monsieur de Courteilles. I have begged Monsieur de Malesherbes to endeavour to procure me a copy of this letter. If I get it, by him or others, it will be found in the collection which I intend shall accompany my Confessions.

The experience I began to acquire tended to moderate

my romantic projects: for example, not only did I not fall in love with Madame de Bonac, but also felt I did not stand much chance of succeeding in the service of her husband. Monsieur de La Martinière in office, and Monsieur de Marianne in expectancy, my utmost hopes could only aspire to the office of under-secretary, which did not infinitely tempt me. This was the reason that, when consulted on the situation I should like to be placed in, I expressed a great desire to go to Paris. The Ambassador readily gave in to the idea, which at least tended to disembarrass him of me. Monsieur de Merveilleux, interpreting secretary to the embassy, said that his friend Monsieur Godard, a Swiss colonel in the service of France, wanted a person to be with his nephew, who had entered the service very young, and he supposed that I would suit him. On this idea, so lightly formed, my departure was determined; and I, who saw a journey to perform, with Paris at the end of it, was enraptured at the project. They gave me several letters, a hundred francs to defray the expenses of my journey, accompanied with some good advice, and I started.

I was a fortnight making the journey, which I may reckon among the happiest days of my life. I was young, in perfect health, with plenty of money, and the most brilliant hopes; added to this, I was on foot, and alone. It would appear strange that I should mention the latter circumstance as advantageous, if my peculiarity of temper were not already familiar to the reader. I was continually occupied with pleasing chimeras, and never did the warmth of my imagination produce more magnificent ones. When offered an empty place in a carriage, or any person accosted me on the road, how vexed was I to see that fortune overthrown whose edifice I had erected while walking! For once, my ideas were all martial: I was going to live with a military man; nay, to become

one, for it was concluded I should begin with being a cadet. I already fancied myself in regimentals, with a fine white plume, and my heart was inflamed by this noble idea. I had some smattering of geometry and fortification; my uncle was an engineer; I was, in a manner, a soldier by inheritance. My short sight, indeed, presented some little obstacle, but did not by any means discourage me, as I reckoned to supply that defect by coolness and intrepidity. I had read, too, that Marshal Schomberg was remarkably short-sighted, and why might not Marshal Rousseau be the same? My imagination was so warmed by these follies that it presented nothing but troops, ramparts, gabions, batteries, and myself in the midst of fire and smoke, an eye-glass in hand, tranquilly giving orders. Notwithstanding, when the country presented a delightful prospect, when I saw groves and rivulets, the pleasing sight made me sigh with regret, and feel, in the midst of all this glory, that my heart was not formed for such disorder and strife; and soon, without knowing how, I found myself among my dear sheepfolds, renouncing for ever the labours of Mars.

How much did the first sight of Paris disappoint the idea I had formed of it! The exterior decorations I had seen at Turin, the beauty of the streets, the symmetry and regularity of the houses, had led me to expect in Paris something more. I had figured to myself a splendid city, beautiful as large, of the most commanding aspect, whose streets were ranges of magnificent palaces, composed of marble and gold. On entering the Faubourg Saint-Marceau I saw nothing but dirty, stinking streets, filthy black houses, an air of slovenliness and poverty, beggars, carters, and botchers, criers of *tisane* and old hats. This struck me so forcibly that all I have since seen of real magnificence in Paris could never erase this first impression, which has ever given me a secret disgust to

residing in that capital; and I may say, the whole time I remained there afterwards was employed in seeking resources which might enable me to live at a distance from it. This is the consequence of a too lively imagination, which exaggerates even beyond the voice of fame, and ever expects more than is told. I had heard Paris so flatteringly described that I pictured it like the ancient Babylon, which perhaps had I seen I might have found equally below the image I had formed in my mind. The same thing happened at the Opera House, to which I hastened the day after my arrival. I was sensible of the same deficiency at Versailles, and some time after on viewing the sea; and the same consequence will always happen to me in viewing objects which I have heard highly extolled; for it is impossible for man, and difficult for nature herself, to surpass the wealth of my imagination.

By the reception I met with from all those to whom my letters were addressed, I thought my fortune was certainly made. The person who received me the least kindly was Monsieur de Surbeck, to whom I had the warmest recommendation. He had retired from the service, and lived philosophically at Bagneux, where I waited on him several times without his offering me even a glass of water. I was better received by Madame de Merveilleux, sister-in-law to the interpreter, and by his nephew, who was an officer in the Gardes. The mother and son not only received me kindly, but offered me the use of their table, which favour I frequently accepted during my stay at Paris. Madame de Merveilleux appeared to have been handsome; her hair was of a fine black, which, according to the old mode, she wore curled on the temples. She still retained — what do not perish with a set of features — the beauties of an amiable mind. She appeared satisfied with mine, and did all she could to render me service;

but no one seconded her endeavours, and I was presently undeceived in the great interest they had seemed to take in my affairs. I must, however, do the French nation the justice to say that they do not exhaust themselves in protestations, as some have represented, and those that they make are usually sincere; but they have a manner of appearing interested in your affairs, which is more deceiving than words. The gross compliments of the Swiss can only impose upon fools; the manners of the French are more seducing, for the reason that they are more simple. You are persuaded they do not express all they mean to do for you, in order that you may be all the more agreeably surprised. I will say more: they are not false in their demonstrations, being naturally zealous to oblige, humane, benevolent, and even, whatever may be said to the contrary, more sincere than any other nation; but they are too flighty. They feel truly the sentiment they profess for you, but that sentiment flies off as quickly as it came. In speaking to you, their whole attention is fixed on you alone; when absent, you are forgotten. Nothing is permanent in their hearts; all is the work of the moment.

Thus I was greatly flattered, but received little service. Colonel Godard, for whose nephew I was recommended, proved to be an avaricious old wretch, who, on seeing my distress, though he was immensely rich, wished to have my services for nothing, meaning to place me with his nephew rather as a valet without wages than a tutor. He represented that as I was to be continually engaged with him I should be excused from duty, and might live on my cadet's allowance — that is to say, on the pay of a soldier; hardly would he consent to give me a uniform, thinking the clothing of the army might serve. Madame de Merveilleux, provoked at his proposals, persuaded me not to accept them; her son was of the same opinion;

something else was to be thought on, but no situation was procured. Meantime I began to be straitened; for the hundred francs with which I had commenced my journey could not last much longer. Happily, I received a small remittance from the Ambassador, which was very serviceable, nor do I think he would have abandoned me had I possessed more patience; but languishing, waiting, soliciting, are to me impossible. I was disheartened, I ceased to make calls, and all was over. I had not forgotten my poor Mamma, but how was I to find her? Where should I seek her? Madame de Merveilleux, who knew my story, assisted me in the search, but for a long time unavailingly; at length she informed me that Madame de Warens had set out on her return above two months before, but it was not known whether for Savoy or Turin, and that some conjectured she had gone to Switzerland. Nothing further was necessary to fix my determination to follow her, certain that, wherever she might be, I stood more chance of finding her in the country than at Paris.

Before my departure I exercised my new poetical talent in an epistle to Colonel Godard, whom I ridiculed to the utmost of my abilities. I showed this scribble to Madame de Merveilleux, who, instead of discouraging me, as she ought to have done, laughed heartily at my sarcasms, as well as her son, who, I believe, did not like Monsieur Godard; indeed, it must be confessed he was not a loveable man. I was tempted to send him my verses, and they encouraged me in it; accordingly I made them up in a parcel directed to him, and there being no local post then at Paris, I put it in my pocket, and sent it to him from Auxerre, as I passed through that place. I laugh even yet, sometimes, at the grimaces he must have made on reading this panegyric, where he was certainly drawn to the life. It began thus:

Tu croyais, vieux penard, qu'une folle manie
D'élever ton neveu m'inspirerait l'envie.

This little piece, which, it is true, was but indifferently written, did not want for salt, and announced a turn for satire; it is, notwithstanding, the only satirical writing that ever came from my pen. I have too little hatred in my heart to take advantage of such a talent; but I believe it may be judged from some polemical pieces, which from time to time I have put forth in my own defence, that, had I been of a vindictive disposition, my adversaries would rarely have had the laughter on their side.

What I most regret is not having kept a journal of my travels, being conscious that a number of interesting details have slipped my memory; for never did I exist so completely, never live so thoroughly, never was so much myself, if I may so speak, as in those journeys made alone and on foot. Walking animates and enlivens my spirits; I can hardly think when in a state of inactivity; my body must be exercised to make my judgment active. The view of a fine country, a succession of agreeable prospects, a free air, a good appetite, and the health I gain by walking; the freedom of inns, and the distance from everything that can make me recollect the dependence of my situation, conspire to free my soul, and give boldness to my thoughts, throwing me, in a manner, into the immensity of beings, where I combine, choose, and appropriate them to my fancy, without constraint or fear. I dispose of all nature as I please; my heart, wandering from object to object, approximates and unites with those that please it, is surrounded by charming images, and becomes intoxicated with delicious sensations. If, attempting to render these permanent, I amuse myself in forming a mental picture, what boldness of outline, what glow of colouring, what

energy of expression, do I give them! It has been said that all these are to be found in my works, though written in the decline of life. Oh! had those of my early youth been seen, those made during my travels, composed, but never written! Why did I not write them? will be asked. And why should I have written them? I may answer. Why deprive myself of the actual charm of my enjoyments to tell others what I enjoyed? What to me were readers, the public, or all the world, while I was mounting the empyrean? Besides, did I carry pens, paper, and ink with me? Had I made such provision, not a thought would have occurred worth preserving. I do not foresee when I shall have ideas; they come when they please, and not when I call for them; either they avoid me altogether, or, rushing in crowds, overwhelm me with their force and number. Ten volumes a day would not have sufficed; how then should I find time to write them? In stopping, I thought of nothing but a hearty dinner; on departing, of nothing but a charming walk; I felt that a new paradise awaited me at the door, and to attain it was my sole object.

Never did I experience this so feelingly as in the return journey I am now describing. In coming to Paris, I had confined myself to ideas concerning the situation I expected to occupy there. I had rushed into the career I was about to run, and had made a pretty glorious progress, but it was not that that my heart adhered to. Some real beings obscured my imagined ones. Colonel Godard and his nephew could not keep pace with a hero of my disposition. Thank Heaven, I was now delivered from all these obstacles, and could enter at pleasure into the wilderness of chimeras, for that alone remained before me, and I wandered in it so completely that I several times lost my way; but this was no misfortune. I would not have shortened it; for, feeling with regret,

as I approached Lyons, that I must again return to the material world, I should have been glad never to have arrived there.

One day, among others, having purposely gone out of my way to take a nearer view of a spot that appeared delightful, I was so charmed with it, and wandered round it so often, that at length I completely lost myself, and after several hours' useless walking, weary, fainting with hunger and thirst, I entered a peasant's hut, which had not indeed a promising appearance, but was the only one I could discover near me. I thought it was here as at Geneva or in Switzerland, where the inhabitants, living at ease, have it in their power to exercise hospitality. I entreated the countryman to give me some dinner, offering to pay for it. He presented me with some skimmed milk and coarse barley bread, saying it was all he had. I drank the milk with pleasure, and ate the bread, chaff and all; but it was not very restorative to a man sinking with fatigue. The countryman, who watched me narrowly, judged the truth of my story by my appetite. Presently after — having said that he plainly saw [1] I was an honest, good-natured young man, and did not come to betray him — he opened a little trap-door by the side of his kitchen, went down, and returned a moment after with a good brown loaf of pure wheat, the remains of a good but rather highly flavoured ham, and a bottle of wine, the sight of which rejoiced my heart more than all the rest. He then prepared a good thick omelet, and I made such a dinner as none but a walking traveller ever enjoyed. When I again offered to pay, his inquietude and fears returned. He not only would have no money, but refused it with the most evident emotion; and what made this scene more amusing, I could not imagine the

[1] Apparently my face at that period did not much resemble my portraits taken in later life. — R.

motive of his fear. At length he pronounced tremblingly those terrible words, 'commissioners' and 'cellar-rats,' which he explained by giving me to understand that he concealed his wine because of the excise, and his bread on account of the tax imposed on it; adding he should be an undone man if it were suspected he was not almost perishing with want. What he said to me on this subject, of which I had not the smallest idea, made an impression on my mind that can never be effaced, sowing seeds of that inextinguishable hatred which has since grown up in my heart against the vexations these unhappy people suffer, and against their oppressors. This man, though in easy circumstances, dared not eat the bread gained by the sweat of his brow, and could only escape ruin by exhibiting an outward appearance of misery! I left his cottage with as much indignation as concern, deploring the fate of those beautiful countries, where Nature has been prodigal of her gifts, only that they may become the prey of barbarous exactors.

The incident which I have just related is the only one of which I have a distinct remembrance during this journey. I recollect, indeed, that on approaching Lyons I wished to prolong it by going to see the banks of the Lignon; for, among the romances I had read with my father, *L'Astrée* was not forgotten, and recurred more frequently to my thoughts than any other. Stopping for some refreshment, while chatting with my hostess I inquired the way to Forez, and was informed that that country was an excellent place for mechanics, as there were many forges, and much ironwork done there. This eulogium instantly calmed my romantic curiosity, for I felt no inclination to seek Dianas and Sylvanders among a generation of blacksmiths. The good woman who encouraged me with this piece of information certainly thought I was a journeyman locksmith.

I had some view in going to Lyons. On my arrival I went to Les Chasottes to see Mademoiselle du Châtelet, a friend of Madame de Warens, for whom I had brought a letter when I came there with Monsieur Le Maître, so that it was an acquaintance already formed. Mademoiselle du Châtelet informed me that her friend had indeed passed through Lyons, but could not tell whether she had gone on to Piedmont, being uncertain at her departure whether it would not be necessary to stop in Savoy; but, if I chose, she would immediately write for information, and thought my best plan would be to remain at Lyons till she received it. I accepted this offer, but did not tell Mademoiselle de Châtelet how much I was pressed for an answer, and that my exhausted purse would not permit me to wait long. It was not an appearance of coolness that withheld me; on the contrary, I was very kindly received, treated on the footing of equality, and this took from me the resolution of explaining my circumstances, for I could not bear to descend from a companion to a miserable beggar.

I seem to have retained a very complete remembrance of the successive events contained in this book, yet I think I remember, about the same period, another journey to Lyons, which I cannot place in its due order, where I found myself much straitened. A little anecdote, that presents some difficulty in the relation, will not suffer me to forget it. One evening I sat at Bellecour after a slight supper, meditating on my difficulties and prospects, when a man wearing a cotton bonnet seated himself by my side. He seemed to be one of those silkworkers called at Lyons *taffetatiers*. He spoke to me; I replied in a friendly way. We had not been conversing for more than a quarter of an hour, when, with perfect coolness of voice and manner, he proposed that we should take some amusement together. I was so scared by the

impudence of his succeeding remarks that, without replying, I hastily arose and ran away at full speed, thinking the wretch must be close at my heels. So strongly was I agitated that, instead of proceeding to my lodging by the Rue Saint-Dominique, I ran along the quay, and did not stop till past the wooden bridge, trembling all the while like a criminal. I was subject to the same vice; the recollection of this affair cured me of it for a long period.

In my present journey I met with a somewhat similar adventure, which, however, was attended with greater danger. Conscious that my resources were fast diminishing, I tried to make the small remainder go as far as possible. I ate fewer meals at the inn, and soon quite ceased to frequent the table; and, instead of spending there some five-and-twenty sous, went to a tavern, where I could satisfy my appetite as fully for five or six. Ceasing to take my food at the inn, I knew not how, with a good grace, to go thither to sleep — not that I owed my hostess much, but was ashamed, as a profitless guest, to occupy a room. The weather was fine; one very warm evening I resolved to spend the night in the public square, and had already taken my place upon a bench, when an abbé, who in passing had noticed me, approached and asked whether I was homeless. I told him how matters stood with me, and he seemed affected. He sat down beside me, and we conversed. He spoke agreeably; from all that he said I conceived a wonderfully good opinion of him. When he saw me disposed in his favour, he told me that his lodging was not very roomy; that he had but a single chamber, but that he really could not suffer me to sleep where I was; that it was too late to seek another bed, and that he would offer me half of his own for the night. I accepted his offer, thinking that I had fallen in with one who might prove a useful friend. We

soon arrived, and he struck a light. His chamber, though small, appeared to be very neat, and he played the host politely. We each ate a couple of brandied cherries, which he took from a glass jar, and retired to rest.

This man's tastes resembled those of my Jew at the asylum for converts, but his manner was less brutal. Gently, and with as much firmness as I could command, I spoke to him in a fashion that brought him to a better state of mind, and the night passed tranquilly. Indeed, he made many excellent and sensible observations, and did not lack merit of a sort, though assuredly he was a very vile fellow.

In the morning, Monsieur l'Abbé, who would fain put a fair face on the matter, talked of breakfast, and asked one of the landlady's daughters, a pretty girl, to serve it. She told him that she could not spare time to do so. He then made the same request of her sister, who did not deign to reply. Still we waited — no appearance of breakfast. At length we went into their apartment, where Monsieur l'Abbé had a very ill welcome, my own reception being even less satisfactory. The elder girl, in turning round, planted her heel on my foot, just where a grievous corn had obliged me to cut the shoe-leather; the other snatched away a chair on which I was about to sit; her mother, in flinging water out of the window, splashed my face; wherever I took up my position I was bidden to move that they might search for some article. I had never in my life experienced such treatment. In their looks were mingled anger, insult, and covert contempt, which at the time I was too stupid to comprehend. Bewildered, astonished, almost believing them to be mad, a real terror came over me, when the abbé, who feigned neither to see nor to hear, and judged that no breakfast was to be hoped for, determined to leave, and I hastened after him, glad to escape from the three furies.

As we went along he proposed that we should breakfast at a café. Hungry though I was, I refused his offer, which, indeed, he did not make in a very pressing fashion, and we parted at the third or fourth street-corner — I delighted to be out of sight of that accursed house, and all that pertained to it; he well pleased, I imagine, that he had led me so far from it that I could not easily find it again. Since neither at Paris nor in any other town have I ever encountered a parallel to these two adventures, there was left in my mind a most unfavourable impression of the natives of Lyons — a city which I regard as more hideously corrupt than any other in Europe.

The recollection of the extremities to which I was reduced does not contribute to recall the idea agreeably. Had I been like many others, had I possessed the talent of borrowing and running in debt at every cabaret, I might have fared better; but in that my incapacity equalled my repugnance, and, to demonstrate the prevalence of both, it will be sufficient to say that, though I have passed almost my whole life in indifferent circumstances, and frequently on the point of wanting bread, I was never once asked for money by a creditor without having it in my power to pay it instantly. I could never bear to contract clamorous debts, and have ever preferred suffering to owing.

Being reduced to pass my nights in the streets may certainly be called suffering, and this was several times the case at Lyons, having preferred to buy bread with the few pence I had remaining to bestowing them on lodgings, as I was convinced there was less danger of dying for want of sleep than of hunger. What is astonishing, while in this unhappy situation, I took no care for the future, was neither uneasy nor melancholy, but patiently waited an answer to Mademoiselle du Châtelet's letter, and, lying in the open air, stretched on the earth, or on a

bench, slept as soundly as if reposing on a bed of roses. I remember, particularly, to have passed a most delightful night outside the city, on a road which had the Rhône, or Saône — I cannot recollect which — on the one side, and a range of terraced gardens on the other. It had been a very hot day, the evening was delightful, the dew moistened the withering grass, no wind was stirring, the air was fresh without chilliness, the setting sun had tinged the clouds with a beautiful crimson, which was again reflected by the water, and the trees that bordered the terrace were filled with nightingales, who were continually answering each other's songs. I walked along in a kind of ecstasy, giving up my heart and senses to the enjoyment of so many delights, and sighing only from a regret of enjoying them alone. Absorbed in this pleasing reverie, I lengthened my walk till it grew very late, without perceiving that I was tired; at length, however, I discovered it, and threw myself on the step of a kind of niche, or false door, in a terrace wall. How charming was the couch! The trees formed a stately canopy, a nightingale sat directly over me, and with his soft notes lulled me to rest. How sweet my repose — my awaking more so! It was broad day; on opening my eyes I saw the water, the verdure, an admirable landscape. I arose, shook off the remains of drowsiness, and, finding I was hungry, gaily retook the way to the city, resolving to spend the two pieces of six blancs I had yet remaining in a good breakfast. I found myself so cheerful that I went all the way singing. I even remember that I sang a cantata of Batistin's called 'Les Bains de Thomery,' which I knew by heart. May a blessing light on the good Batistin and his good cantata, which procured me a better breakfast than I had expected, and a still better dinner, which I did not expect at all! In the midst of my singing I heard some one behind me, and, turning round,

perceived an Antonine,[1] who followed after and seemed to listen with pleasure to my song. At length, accosting me, he asked whether I understood music. I answered, 'A little,' but in a manner to have it understood that I knew a great deal, and, as he continued questioning of me, I related a part of my story. He asked me if I had ever copied music. I replied, 'Often,' which was true, for I had learned most by copying. 'Well,' continued he, 'come with me, I can employ you for a few days, during which time you shall want for nothing, provided you consent not to quit my room.' I acquiesced very willingly, and followed him.

This Antonine was called Monsieur Rolichon; he loved music, understood it, and sang in some little concerts with his friends. Thus far all was innocent and right, but apparently this taste had become a furore, part of which he was obliged to conceal. He conducted me into a small chamber, where I found a great quantity of music; he gave me some to copy, particularly the cantata he had heard me singing, and which he was shortly to sing himself. I remained here three or four days, copying all the time I did not eat, for never in my life was I so hungry, or better fed. He brought my provisions himself from the kitchen, and it appeared that these people lived well — at least, if every one fared as I did. In my life I never took such pleasure in eating, and it must be owned this good cheer came very opportunely, for my purse was almost exhausted. I worked nearly as heartily as I ate, which is saying a great deal; 'tis true I was not as correct as diligent, for some days after, meeting Monsieur Rolichon in the street, he informed me there were so many omissions, repetitions, and transpositions in the parts I had copied that they could not be performed. It must be owned that, in

[1] One of a community of secularised monks.

choosing subsequently the profession of music, I hit on that which I was least calculated for; yet my voice was good, and I copied neatly; but the fatigue of long work bewilders me so much that I spend more time in altering and scratching out than in pricking down, and, if I do not employ the strictest attention in comparing the several parts, they are sure to fail in the execution. Thus, though endeavouring to do well, my performance was very faulty; for, aiming at expedition, I did all amiss. This did not prevent Monsieur Rolichon from treating me well to the last, and giving me an écu at my departure, which I certainly did not deserve, and which completely set me up, for a few days after I received news from Mamma, who was at Chambéri, with money to defray my expenses of the journey to her, which I performed with rapture. Since then my finances have frequently been very low, but never at such an ebb as to reduce me to fasting, and I note this period with a heart fully alive to the bounty of Providence, as the last in my life in which I sustained poverty and hunger.

I remained at Lyons seven or eight days longer, to wait for some little commissions with which Mamma had charged Mademoiselle du Châtelet, whom, during this interval, I visited more assiduously than before, having the pleasure of talking with her of her friend, and being no longer disturbed by the cruel thought of my situation, or endeavours to conceal it. Mademoiselle du Châtelet was neither young nor handsome, but did not want for elegance; she was easy and obliging, while her understanding lent a grace to her familiarity. She had a taste for that kind of moral observation which leads to the knowledge of mankind, and from her originated the taste for that study in myself. She was fond of Le Sage's novels, particularly *Gil Blas*, which she lent me, and recommended to my perusal. I read it with pleasure, but my

judgment was not yet ripe enough for that species of reading. I liked romances which dealt with high-flown sentiments. Thus did I pass my time in visiting Mademoiselle du Châtelet, with as much profit as pleasure. It is certain that the interesting and sensible conversation of a meritorious woman is more proper to form the understanding of a young man than all the pedantic philosophy of books. I became acquainted at Les Chasottes with some other boarders and their friends, and, among the rest, with a young person of fourteen, called Mademoiselle Serre, whom I did not much notice at that time, though I was deeply in love with her eight or nine years afterwards, and with great reason, for she was a charming girl.

Fully occupied with the idea of seeing Mamma, I gave some respite to my chimeras, for, finding happiness in real objects, I was the less inclined to seek it in visions. I had not only found her, but also by her means, and near her, an agreeable situation, for she sent me word that she had procured one that would suit me, and which would not oblige me to quit her. I exhausted all my conjectures in guessing what this occupation could be, but I must have possessed the art of divination to have hit on the truth. I had money sufficient to make my journey agreeable. Mademoiselle de Châtelet would have persuaded me to hire a horse, but this I could not consent to, and I was certainly right; by so doing I should have lost the pleasure of the last pedestrian expedition I ever made; for I cannot give that name to those excursions I have frequently taken about my own neighbourhood when living at Motiers.

It is very singular that my imagination never rises so high as when my situation is least agreeable or cheerful. When everything smiles around me, then I am least amused; my erratic brain cannot confine itself to realities,

cannot embellish, but must create. Real objects but strike me as they really are; my imagination can only adorn ideal ones. If I would paint the spring, it must be in winter; if I describe a beautiful landscape, it must be while surrounded with walls; and I have said a hundred times that were I confined to the Bastille, I could draw the picture of liberty. On my departure from Lyons, I saw nothing but an agreeable future; the content I now with reason enjoyed was as great as my discontent had been at leaving Paris, notwithstanding I had not during this journey any of those delightful reveries I then enjoyed. My mind was serene, and that was all. I was drawing near the excellent friend I was again to see, my heart overflowing with tenderness, enjoying in advance, but without intoxication, the pleasure of living near her: I had always expected this, and it was as if nothing new had happened. I was anxious about the nature of my future employment, as if that alone had been material. My ideas were calm and peaceable, not ravishing and celestial; every object struck my sight in its natural form; I observed the surrounding landscape, marked the trees, the houses, the rivulets, deliberated on the cross-roads, was fearful of losing myself, yet did not do so. In a word, I was no longer in the empyrean, but precisely where I found myself, or sometimes, perhaps, at the end of my journey — never further.

I am, in recounting my travels, as I was in making them, loath to arrive at the conclusion. My heart beat with joy as I approached my dear Mamma, but I went no faster on that account. I love to walk at my ease, and stop at leisure; a strolling life is necessary to me. Travelling on foot, in a fine country, with fine weather, with no need for haste, and with the expectation of an agreeable conclusion to my journey, is the manner of living of all others most suited to my taste. It is already under-

stood what I mean by a fine country; never could a flat one, though ever so beautiful, appear such in my eyes. I must have torrents, fir-trees, black woods, mountains to climb or descend, and rugged roads with precipices on either side to alarm me. I experienced this pleasure in all its charm as I approached Chambéri, not far from a mountain which is called Pas de l'Echelle. Beneath the main road, which is hewn through the rock, at a place known as Chailles, a small river runs and rushes into fearful chasms, which it appears to have been millions of ages in hollowing out. The road has been hedged by a parapet to prevent accidents, which enabled me to contemplate the whole descent, and become dizzy at pleasure; for what is singularly amusing in my taste for these steep rocks is that they cause a swimming in my head, for which I have a fondness, provided I am in safety. Leaning, therefore, over the parapet, I remained whole hours, catching, from time to time, a glance of the froth and blue water, whose rushing caught my ear, mingled with the cries of ravens and other birds of prey that flew from rock to rock, and bush to bush, at six hundred feet below me. In places where the slope was tolerably regular, and clear enough from bushes to let stones roll freely, I went a considerable way to gather some so large that I could just carry them, which I piled on the parapet, and then threw down one after the other, being transported at seeing them roll, rebound, and fly into a thousand pieces, before they reached the bottom of the precipice.

Near Chambéri I enjoyed an equally pleasing spectacle, though of a different kind, the road passing near the foot of the most charming cascade I ever saw. The water, which is very rapid, shoots from the top of an excessively steep mountain, falling at such a distance from its base that it is possible to walk between the cascade and the

rock without any inconvenience; but if not particularly careful it is easy to be deceived, as I was, for the water, falling from such an immense height, separates and descends in a rain as fine as dust, and, on approaching too near this cloud, without perceiving it, you may be wet through in an instant.

At length I arrive — I behold her. She was not alone, Monsieur l'Intendant-Général was with her. Without speaking a word to me, she caught my hand, and, presenting me to him with that natural grace which charmed all hearts, said, 'This, sir, is the poor young man I mentioned; deign to protect him as long as he deserves it, and I shall feel no concern for the remainder of his life.' Then added, addressing herself to me, 'Child, you now belong to the King; thank Monsieur l'Intendant, who supplies you with the means of existence.' I stared without answering, without knowing what to think of all this; rising ambition almost turned my head; I was already prepared to act the Intendant myself. My fortune, however, was not so brilliant as it appeared at the first blush, but it was sufficient to maintain me, which, as I was situated, was a capital acquisition. I shall now explain the nature of my employment.

King Victor Amadeus, judging by the event of the preceding wars, and the situation of the ancient patrimony of his fathers, that he should not long be able to maintain it, wished to drain it beforehand. Having resolved, therefore, to tax the nobility, he had ordered a general survey of the whole country, in order that the rate might be more equally assessed. This scheme, which was begun under the father, was completed by the son; two or three hundred men, part surveyors, who were called geometricians, and part writers, who were called secretaries, were employed in this work; among those of the latter description Mamma had got me appointed. This post,

without being very lucrative, furnished the means of living comfortably in that country; the misfortune was, this employment could not be of any great duration, but it put me in train to seek for something better, as by this means she hoped to insure the particular protection of the Intendant, who might find me some more settled occupation when this was concluded.

I entered on my new employment a few days after my arrival, and, as there was no great difficulty in the business, soon mastered it; thus, after four or five years of unsettled life, folly, and suffering, since my departure from Geneva, I began, for the first time, to gain my bread with credit.

These long details of my early youth must have appeared puerile, and I am sorry for it: though born a man, in a variety of instances I was long a child, and am so yet in many particulars. I did not promise the public a great personage. I promised to describe myself as I am; and, to know me in my advanced age, it is necessary to know what I was in my youth. As, in general, objects that are present make less impression on me than the bare remembrance of them, my ideas being all from recollection, the first traits which were engraven on my mind have distinctly remained: those which have since been imprinted there have rather combined with the former than effaced them. There is a certain yet varied succession of affections and ideas, which continue to modify those that follow them, and this progression must be known, in order to judge rightly of those they have influenced. I have studied to develop the first causes, the better to show the concatenation of effects. I would desire by some means to render my soul transparent to the eyes of the reader, and for this purpose endeavour to show it in every possible point of view, to give him every insight, and act in such a manner that not a motion should

escape him, as by this means he may form a judgment of the principles that produce them.

Were I to take upon myself to decide, and say to the reader, 'Such is my character,' he might think that, if I did not endeavour to deceive him, I at least deceived myself; but in recounting simply all that has happened to me, all my actions, thoughts, and feelings, I cannot lead him into an error, unless I do it wilfully, which by this means I could not easily effect, since it is his province to compare the elements, and judge of the being they compose: thus the result must be his work, and if he is then deceived, the error will be his own. It is not sufficient for this purpose that my recitals should be merely faithful, they must also be exact; it is not for me to judge of the importance of facts, I ought to declare them simply as they are, and leave the estimate that is to be formed of them to him. I have adhered to this principle hitherto, with the most scrupulous exactitude, and shall not depart from it in the continuation; but the impressions of age are always less vivid than those of youth. I began by delineating the latter, as best I could: should I recollect the rest with the same precision, the reader may, perhaps, become weary and impatient, but I shall not be dissatisfied with my labour. I have but one thing to apprehend in this undertaking: I do not dread saying too much, or advancing falsities, but am fearful of not saying enough, or concealing truths.

BOOK V

[1732–1736]

IT was, I believe, in 1732 that I arrived at Chambéri, as already related, and began my employment of registering land for the King. I was almost twenty-one, my mind well enough formed for my age, with respect to sense, but deficient in point of judgment, and needing every instruction from those into whose hands I fell, to make me conduct myself with propriety; for a few years' experience had not been able to cure me radically of my romantic ideas; and, notwithstanding the ills I had sustained, I knew as little of the world, or mankind, as if I had never purchased instruction.

I slept at home — that is, at Mamma's house — but it was not at Annecy: here were no gardens, no brook, no landscape; the house was dark and dismal, and my apartment the most gloomy of the whole. The prospect a dead wall, an alley instead of a street, confined air, bad light, small rooms, iron bars, rats, and a rotten floor — an assemblage of circumstances that do not constitute a very agreeable habitation; but I was in her house, incessantly near her, at my desk or in her chamber, so that I could not perceive the gloominess of my own, or have time to think of it. It may appear odd that she should reside at Chambéri on purpose to live in this disagreeable house; but it was a trait of contrivance which I ought not to pass over in silence. She had no inclination for a journey to Turin, fearing that, after the recent

revolutions, and the agitation in which the Court yet was, she should not be very favourably received there; but her affairs seemed to demand her presence, as she feared being forgotten or ill-treated, particularly as the Comte de Saint-Laurent, Intendant-Général of the Finances, was not in her interest. He had an old house at Chambéri, ill-built, and standing in so disagreeable a situation that it was always untenanted; she hired and settled in this house — a plan that succeeded much better than a journey to Turin would have done, for her pension was not suppressed, and the Comte de Saint-Laurent was ever after her friend.

Her household was much on the old footing; the faithful Claude Anet still remained with her. He was, as I have before mentioned, a peasant of Moutru, who in his childhood had gathered herbs in the Jura for the purpose of making Swiss tea: she had taken him into her service for his knowledge of drugs, finding it convenient to have an herbalist among her domestics. Passionately fond of the study of plants, he became under her guidance a real botanist, and, had he not died young, might have acquired as much fame in that science as he deserved for being an honest man. Serious even to gravity, and older than myself, he was to me a kind of tutor, commanding respect, and preserving me from a number of follies, for I dared not forget myself before him. He commanded it likewise from his mistress, who knew his understanding, uprightness, and inviolable attachment to herself, and returned it. Claude Anet was of an uncommon temper; I never encountered a similar disposition. He was slow, deliberate, and circumspect in his conduct; cold in his manner; laconic and sententious in discourse; yet of an impetuosity in his passions which, though carefully concealed, preyed upon him inwardly, and urged him to the only folly he ever committed: that folly indeed was ter-

rible — it was poisoning himself. This tragic scene passed soon after my arrival, and opened my eyes to the intimacy that subsisted between Claude Anet and his mistress, for, had not the information come from her, I should never have suspected it; yet surely, if attachment, fidelity, and zeal could merit such a recompense, it was due to him, and, what further proves him worthy such a distinction, he never once abused her confidence. They seldom disputed, and their disagreements ever ended amicably. One, indeed, was not so fortunate; his mistress, in a passion, insulted him grossly, which not being able to digest, he consulted only with despair and, finding a bottle of laudanum at hand, drank it off; then went peaceably to bed, expecting to wake no more. Fortunately Madame de Warens herself was uneasy, agitated, wandering about the house, and, finding the phial empty, guessed the rest. Her screams, while flying to his assistance, alarmed me; she confessed all, implored my help, and was fortunate enough, after repeated efforts, to make him vomit the laudanum. Witness of this scene, I could not but wonder at my stupidity in never having suspected the connection; but Claude Anet was so discreet that a more penetrating observer might have been deceived. Their reconciliation affected me, and added respect to the esteem I had before felt for him. From this time I became, in some measure, his pupil, nor did I find myself the worse for his instruction.

I could not learn without pain that she lived in greater intimacy with another than with myself: it was a situation I had not even thought of, but — which was very natural — it hurt me to see another in possession of it. Nevertheless, instead of feeling any aversion to the person who had this advantage over me, I found the attachment I felt for her actually extend to him. I desired her

happiness above all things, and, since he was necessary to her happiness, I was content that he should be happy likewise. Meantime he entered perfectly into the views of his mistress, and conceived a sincere friendship for the friend whom she had chosen, and without affecting the authority his situation might have entitled him to, he naturally possessed that which his superior judgment gave him over mine. I dared to do nothing he disapproved of, but he was sure to disapprove only of what merited disapprobation: thus we lived in a union which rendered us mutually happy, and which death alone could dissolve.

One proof of the excellence of this amiable woman's character is, that all those who loved her loved each other, even jealousy and rivalry submitting to the more powerful sentiment with which she inspired them, and I never saw any of those who surrounded her entertain the least ill-will among themselves. Let the reader pause a moment on this encomium, and if he can recollect any other woman who deserves it, let him attach himself to her, if he would obtain happiness — yes, though she be the most degraded of harlots.[1]

From my arrival at Chambéri to my departure for Paris, in 1741, there is an interval of eight or nine years, of which time I have few adventures to relate, my life being as simple as it was agreeable. This uniformity was precisely what was most wanting to complete the formation of my character, which continual troubles had prevented from acquiring any degree of stability. It was during this pleasing interval that my unconnected, unfinished education gained consistence, and made me what I have unalterably remained amid the storms that awaited me. The progress was slow, almost im-

[1] 'La dernière des catins.' These words were suppressed in the Geneva edition.

perceptible, and attended by few memorable circumstances; yet it deserves to be followed and investigated.

At first, I was wholly occupied with my business, the constraint of a desk left little opportunity for other thoughts; the small portion of time I was at liberty was passed with my good Mamma, and, not having leisure to read, I felt no inclination for it; but when my business, by daily repetition, became familiar, and my mind was less occupied, study again became necessary, and, as my desires in this direction were ever irritated by difficulty, might once more have become a passion, as at my master's, had not other inclinations interposed and diverted it.

Though our occupation did not demand a very profound skill in arithmetic, it sometimes required enough to puzzle me. To conquer this difficulty, I purchased books which treated of that science, and learned well, for I now studied alone. Practical arithmetic extends further than is usually supposed, if you would attain exact precision. There are operations of extreme length, in which I have sometimes seen good geometricians lose themselves. Reflection, assisted by practice, gives clear ideas, and enables you to devise shorter methods; these inventions flatter our self-complacency, while their exactitude satisfies our understanding, and renders a study pleasant, which is, of itself, ungrateful. At length I became so expert as not to be puzzled by any question that was solvable by arithmetical calculation; and even now, while everything I formerly knew fades daily on my memory, this acquirement in a great measure remains, through an interval of thirty years. A few days ago, in a journey I made to Davenport, being with my host at an arithmetical lesson given to his children, I worked out with pleasure, and without errors, a most complicated

sum. While setting down my figures, methought I was still at Chambéri, still in my days of happiness — how far had I to look back for them!

The colouring of our geometricians' plans had given me a taste for drawing; accordingly I bought colours, and began by attempting flowers and landscapes. It was unfortunate that I had not a talent for this art, for my inclination was much disposed to it, and, while surrounded with crayons, pencils, and colours, I could have passed whole months without wishing to leave them. This amusement engaged me so much, that they were obliged to force me from it; and thus it is with every inclination I give in to, it continues to augment till at length it becomes so powerful that I lose sight of everything except the favourite amusement. Years have not been able to cure me of that fault, nay, have not even diminished it; for while I am writing this, behold me, like an old dotard, infatuated with another — to me useless — study [1] which I do not understand, and which even those who have devoted their youthful days to its acquisition are constrained to abandon at the age when I am beginning with it.

At that time, the study I am now speaking of would have been well placed; the opportunity was good, and I had some temptation to profit by it; for the satisfaction I saw in the eyes of Anet, when he came home loaded with newly discovered plants, set me two or three times on the point of going to herborise with him, and I am almost certain that, had I gone once, I should have been caught, and perhaps at this day might have been an excellent botanist, for I know no study more congenial to my natural inclination than that of plants, the life I have led for these ten years past, in the country, being little more than a continual herborising, though I must confess with-

[1] Botany.

out object and without improvement; but at the time I am now speaking of I had no inclination for botany, nay, I even despised and was disgusted at the idea, considering it only as a fit study for an apothecary. Mamma was fond of it merely for this purpose, seeking none but common plants to use in her medical preparations; thus botany, chemistry, and anatomy were confounded in my idea under the general denomination of medicine, and served to furnish me with pleasant sarcasms the whole day, which procured me, from time to time, a box on the ear. Besides this, a very contrary taste grew up with me, and by degrees absorbed all others; this was music. I was certainly born for that science, I loved it from my infancy, and it was the only inclination I have constantly adhered to; but it is astonishing that what nature seems to have designed me for should have cost me so much pains to learn, and that I should acquire it so slowly, that after a whole life spent in the practice of the art, I could never attain to sing with any certainty at sight. What rendered the study of music more agreeable to me at that time was being able to practise it with Mamma. In other respects our tastes were widely different: this was a point of coincidence of which I loved to avail myself. She had no more objection to this than myself: I knew at that time almost as much of it as she did, and after two or three efforts we could make shift to decipher an air. Sometimes, when I saw her busy at her furnace, I have said, 'Mamma, here now is a charming duet, which seems made for the very purpose of spoiling your drugs.' Her answer would be, 'If you make me burn them, I'll make you eat them.' Thus disputing, I drew her to the harpsichord; the furnace was presently forgotten, the extract of juniper or wormwood calcined — she smeared my face with the remains; it was delicious sport.

It may easily be conjectured that I had plenty of employment to fill up my leisure hours; one amusement, however, found room that was well worth all the rest.

We lived in such a confined dungeon that it was necessary sometimes to breathe the open air. Anet induced Mamma to hire a garden in the suburbs, for the purpose of rearing plants; to this garden was added a summer-house, which was furnished in the customary manner; we sometimes dined, and I frequently slept there. Insensibly I became attached to this little retreat; furnished it with a few books and many prints, spending part of my time in ornamenting it, that I might agreeably surprise Mamma when she walked thither. Sometimes I quitted her, that I might enjoy the uninterrupted pleasure of thinking on her; this was a caprice I can neither excuse nor fully explain, I only know this really was the case, and therefore I avow it. I remember Madame de Luxembourg told me one day in raillery of a man who used to leave his mistress that he might enjoy the satisfaction of writing to her; I answered, I could have been this man; I might have added that sometimes I had been this very man. However, I never found it necessary to leave Mamma that I might love her the more ardently, for I was ever as perfectly free with her as when alone — an advantage I never enjoyed with any other person, man or woman, however I might be attached to them; but she was so often surrounded by company who were far from pleasing to me, that spite and weariness drove me to this asylum, where I could indulge her idea, without danger of being interrupted by impertinence.

Thus, my time being divided between business, pleasure, and instruction, my life passed in the most absolute serenity. Europe was not equally tranquil. France and

the Emperor had mutually declared war, the King of Sardinia had entered into the quarrel, and a French army had filed off in Piedmont to occupy the Milanese. One column passed through Chambéri, and, among others, the regiment of Champagne, whose Colonel was Monsieur le Duc de la Trimouille, to whom I was presented. He promised many things, but doubtless never more thought of me. Our little garden was exactly at the end of the faubourg by which the troops entered, so that I could fully satisfy my curiosity in seeing them pass, and I became as anxious for the success of the war as if it had nearly concerned me. Till now I had never troubled myself about politics; for the first time I began reading the gazettes, but with so much partiality on the side of France, that my heart beat with rapture at her most trifling successes, and I was as much afflicted by her reverses as if I had been personally concerned. Had this folly been transient, I should not perhaps have mentioned it; but it took such root in my heart, without any reasonable cause, that when I afterwards acted the anti-despot and proud republican at Paris, I felt, in spite of myself, a secret predilection for the nation I declared servile and for that government I affected to oppose. The oddest of all was that, ashamed of an inclination so contrary to my professed maxims, I dared not own it to any one, but rallied the French on their defeats, while my heart was more wounded than their own. I am certainly the first man who, living with a people who treated him well, and whom he almost adored, put on a borrowed air of despising them; yet my original inclination is so powerful, constant, disinterested, and invincible, that even since my quitting that kingdom, since its government, magistrates, and authors have outvied each other in rancour against me, since it has become fashionable to load me with injustice and abuse, I have not been able to get rid of

this folly, but notwithstanding their ill-treatment, love them in spite of myself.[1]

I long sought the cause of this partiality, but was never able to find any, except in the occasion that gave it birth. A rising taste for literature attached me to French books, to their authors and their country. At the very moment that the French troops were defiling before my eyes, I was reading Brantôme's *Grands Capitaines;* my head was full of the Clissons, Bayards, Lautrecs, Colignys, Montmorencys, and Trimouilles, and I loved their descendants as the heirs of their merit and courage. In each regiment that passed by methought I saw those famous black bands who had formerly done so many noble exploits in Piedmont. In fine, I applied to these all the ideas I had gathered from books; my continuous reading, still drawn from the same nation, nourished my affection for that country, till at length it became a blind passion, which nothing could overcome. I have had occasion to remark several times in the course of my travels that this impression was not peculiar to me, but was more or less active in every country, with that part of the nation who were fond of literature, and cultivated learning; and it was this consideration that balanced the general hatred which the too confident air of the French is so apt to inspire. Their romances, more than their men, attract the women of all countries, and the celebrated dramatic pieces of France create in youth a fondness for their theatres. The reputation which the stage of Paris in particular has acquired draws to it crowds of strangers, who return enthusiasts to their own country. In short, the excellence of their literature captivates the intelligent

[1] 'Seeing even now the beginning of England's decadence, which I foretold in the height of her triumph, I lend myself to the fond hope that the French nation, victorious in turn, will come hither some day, and release me from my sad captivity.' This passage is omitted in some editions.

mind, and in the unfortunate war just ended I have seen their authors and philosophers maintain the glory of France, so tarnished by her warriors.

I was, therefore, an ardent Frenchman. This rendered me a politician, and I attended in the public square, amid a throng of gapers, the arrival of the post, and, sillier than the ass in the fable, was very uneasy to know whose packsaddle I should next have the honour to carry; for it was then supposed we should belong to France, and that Savoy would be exchanged for the Milanese. I must confess, however, that I experienced some uneasiness, for, had this war terminated unfortunately for the allies, Mamma's pension would have been in a dangerous situation. Nevertheless, I had great confidence in my good friends the French, and for once, in spite of the surprise of Monsieur de Broglie, my confidence was not ill-founded — thanks to the King of Sardinia, whom I had never thought of.

While we were fighting in Italy, they were singing in France. The operas of Rameau began to make a noise there, and once more raise the credit of his theoretic works, which, from their obscurity, were within the compass of very few understandings. By chance I heard of his *Traité de l'Harmonie*, and had no rest till I acquired it. By another chance I fell sick; my illness was inflammatory — short and violent — but my convalescence was tedious, for I was unable to go abroad for a whole month. During this time I eagerly ran over my *Traité de l'Harmonie*; but it was so long, so diffuse, and so badly disposed, that I found it would require a considerable time to unravel it; accordingly I suspended my inclination, and recreated my sight with music. The cantatas of Bernier were what I principally exercised myself with. These were never out of my mind; I learned four or five by heart, and, among the rest, *Les Amours*

Dormants, which I have never seen since that time, though I still retain it almost entirely, as well as *L'Amour Piqué par une Abeille*, a very pretty cantata by Clérambault, which I learned about the same time.

To complete me, there arrived a young organist from Val d'Aost, called the Abbé Palais, a good musician and an agreeable accompanist on the harpischord. I got acquainted with him, and we soon became inseparable. He had been brought up by an Italian monk, who was a capital organist. He explained to me his principles of music, which I compared with Rameau's. My head was filled with accompaniments, concords, and harmony, but, as it was necessary to accustom the ear to all this, I proposed to Mamma having a little concert once a month, to which she consented. Behold me, then, so full of this concert, that night or day I could think of nothing else; and it actually employed a great part of my time to select the music, assemble the musicians, look to the instruments, and write out the several parts. Mamma sang; Père Caton (whom I have before mentioned, and shall have occasion to speak of again) sang likewise; a dancing-master named Roche, and his son, played on the violin; Canavas, a Piedmontese musician, who was employed in the survey, and has since married at Paris, played on the violoncello; the Abbé Palais accompanied on the harpsichord; and I had the honour to conduct the whole. It may be supposed all this was charming; I cannot say it equalled my concert at Monsieur de Treytorens', but certainly it was not far behind it.

This little concert, given by Madame de Warens, the new convert, who lived — so it was said — on the King's charity, made the whole tribe of devotees murmur, but was a very agreeable amusement to many worthy people, at the head of whom it would not be easily surmised that I should place a monk, yet, though a monk, a man of

considerable merit, and even of a very amiable disposition, whose subsequent misfortunes gave me the most lively concern, and whose idea, attached to that of my happy days, is yet dear to my memory. I speak of Père Caton, a Cordelier, who, in conjunction with the Comte d'Ortan, had caused the music of the poor 'kitten' to be seized at Lyons — which action was far from being the brightest trait in his history. He was a bachelor of the Sorbonne; had lived long in Paris among the great world, and was particularly in favour with the Marquis d'Antremont, then Ambassador from Sardinia. He was tall and well made; full-faced, with expansive eyes, and black hair, which formed natural curls on each side of his forehead. His manner was at once noble, open, and modest; he presented himself with ease and good manners, having neither the hypocritical nor impudent behaviour of a monk, nor the forward assurance of a man of fashion, but the manners of a well-bred person, who, without blushing for his garb, set a value on himself, and ever felt in his proper situation when in good company. Though Père Caton was not deeply studied for a doctor, he was much so for a man of the world, and, not being compelled to show his talents, he brought them forward so advantageously that they appeared to be greater than they really were. Having lived much in the world, he had attached himself rather to agreeable acquirements than to solid learning; had wit, made verses, spoke well, sang better, and aided his good voice by playing on the organ and harpsichord. So many pleasing qualities were not necessary to make his company sought after, and, accordingly, it was very much so; but this was so far from making him neglect the duties of his function that he was chosen, in spite of his jealous competitors, *définiteur* of his province, or, according to them, one of the great 'collars' of their order.

Père Caton became acquainted with Mamma at the Marquis d'Antremont's; he had heard of our concerts, wished to assist at them, and, by his company, rendered our meetings truly agreeable. We were soon attached to each other by our mutual taste for music, which in both was a most lively passion, with this difference, that he was really a musician, and myself a bungler. Sometimes, assisted by Canavas and the Abbé Palais, we had music in his apartment, or, on holidays, at his organ, and frequently dined with him; for, what was very astonishing in a monk, he was generous, profuse, and loved good cheer, without the least tincture of greediness. After our concerts, he always used to stay to supper with Mamma, and these evenings passed with the greatest gaiety and good-humour; we conversed with complete freedom, and sang duets; I was perfectly at my ease, had sallies of wit and merriment; Père Caton was charming, Mamma was adorable, and the Abbé Palais, with his rough voice, was the butt of the company. Pleasing moments of sportive youth, how long since have ye fled!

As I shall have no more occasion to speak of poor Père Caton, I will here conclude in few words his melancholy history. His brother monks, jealous — or rather exasperated — at seeing in him a merit and elegance of manners which savoured nothing of monastic stupidity, conceived a violent hatred to him, because he was not as despicable as themselves; the chiefs, therefore, combined against this worthy man, and set on the envious rabble of monks, who otherwise would not have dared to hazard the attack. He received a thousand indignities; they degraded him from his office, took away the apartment which he had furnished with elegant simplicity, and at length banished him I know not whither. In short, these wretches overwhelmed him with so many evils that his honest and proud soul sank under the pressure, and,

after having been the delight of the most amiable societies, he died of grief, on a wretched bed, hid in some cell or dungeon, lamented by all worthy people of his acquaintance, who could find no fault with him, except his being a monk.

Accustomed to this manner of life for some time, I became so entirely attached to music that I could think of nothing else. I went to my business with disgust; the necessary confinement and assiduity appeared an insupportable punishment, which I at length wished to relinquish, that I might give myself up without reserve to my favourite amusement. It will be readily believed that this folly met with some opposition; to relinquish a creditable employment and fixed salary to run after uncertain scholars was too giddy a plan to be approved of by Mamma, and, even supposing my future success should prove as great as I flattered myself it would be, it was fixing very humble limits to my ambition to think of reducing myself for life to the condition of a music-master. She, who formed for me the brightest projects, and no longer trusted implicitly to the judgment of Monsieur d'Aubonne, seeing with concern that I was so seriously occupied by a talent which she thought frivolous, frequently repeated to me that provincial proverb, which does not hold quite so good in Paris, 'Qui bien chante et bien danse, fait un métier qui peu avance.' On the other hand, she saw me hurried away by this irresistible passion, my taste for music having become a furore, and it was much to be feared that my employment, suffering by my distraction, might draw on me a discharge, which would be worse than a voluntary resignation. I represented to her that this employment could not last long, that it was necessary I should have some permanent means of subsistence, and that it would be much better to complete by practice the acquisition of that art to

which my inclination led me, and which she had chosen for me, than to seek for patronage, or make fresh essays, which possibly might not succeed, since by that course, having passed the age for learning, I might be left without a single resource for gaining a livelihood. In short, I extorted her consent more by importunity and caresses than by any satisfactory reasons. Proud of my success, I immediately ran to offer my resignation to Monsieur Coccelli, Director-General of the Survey, as though I had performed the most heroic action, and quitted my employment without cause, reason, or pretext, with as much pleasure as I had accepted it less than two years before.

This step, ridiculous as it may appear, procured me a kind of consideration, which I found extremely useful. Some supposed I had resources which I did not possess; others, seeing me totally given up to music, judged of my abilities by the sacrifice I had made, and concluded that, with such a passion for the art, I must possess it in a superior degree. In the country of the blind the one-eyed men are kings. I passed here for an excellent master, because all the rest were bad ones. Possessing taste in singing, and being favoured by my age and figure, I soon procured more scholars than were sufficient to compensate for the loss of my secretary's pay.

It is certain that, had it been reasonable to consider the pleasure of my situation only, it was impossible to pass more speedily from one extreme to the other. At our measuring, I was confined for eight hours daily to the most disagreeable employment, with yet more disagreeable company. Shut up in a melancholy counting-house, empoisoned by the smell and respiration of a number of clowns, the major part of whom were ill-combed and very dirty, what with close application, bad air, constraint, and weariness, I was sometimes so far

overcome as to experience a vertigo. Instead of this, behold me admitted into the fashionable world, sought after in the first houses, and everywhere received with a gracious air of satisfaction; amiable and gaily dressed young ladies awaiting my arrival, and welcoming me with pleasure. I see nothing but charming objects, smell nothing but roses and orange-flowers; singing, chatting, laughter, and amusements perpetually succeed each other. It must be allowed that, reckoning all these advantages, no hesitation was possible in the choice; in fact, I was so content with mine that I never once repented it; nor do I even now, when, free from the irrational motives that influenced me at that time, I weigh in the scale of reason every action of my life.

This is, perhaps, the only time that, listening to the inclination, I was not deceived in my expectations. The easy accessibility, obliging temper, and free humour of this country rendered a commerce with the world agreeable, and the inclination I then felt for it proves to me that, if I have a dislike for the society of mankind, it is more their fault than mine.

It is a pity the Savoyards are not rich; though, perhaps, it would be a still greater pity if they were so, for as it is they are the best, the most sociable, people that I know, and if there be a little town in the world where the pleasures of life are experienced in an agreeable and friendly commerce, it is Chambéri. The gentry of the province who assemble there have only sufficient wealth to live and not enough to spoil them; they cannot give way to ambition, but follow, through necessity, the counsel of Cineas, devoting their youth to a military employment, and returning home to grow old in peace, an arrangement over which honour and reason equally preside. The women are handsome, yet do not stand in need of beauty, since they possess all those qualifications

which enhance its value and even supply its want. It is remarkable that, being obliged by my profession to see a number of young girls, I do not recollect one at Chambéri that was not charming. It will be said I was disposed to find them so, and perhaps there may be some truth in the surmise, though I do not believe their charms needed imaginary aid from me. I cannot remember my young scholars without pleasure. Why, in naming the most amiable, cannot I recall them, and myself also, to that happy age in which our moments, pleasing as innocent, were passed with such happiness together! The first was Mademoiselle de Mellarède, my neighbour, and sister to Monsieur Gaime's pupil. She was a fine, clear brunette, lively, gentle, and graceful, without giddiness; thin, as girls of that age usually are; but her bright eyes, slender shape, and easy air required not the additional attraction of plumpness. I went there every morning, when she was usually in undress, her hair carelessly turned up, and, on my arrival, ornamented with a flower, which was taken off at my departure that her hair might be dressed. There is nothing I fear so much as a pretty woman en déshabillé; I should dread her a hundred times less in full dress. Mademoiselle de Menthon, whom I attended in the afternoon, was ever so. She made an equally pleasing, but quite different impression on me. Her hair was flaxen, her person delicate, she was very timid, and extremely fair, had a clear voice, capable of just modulation, but which she had not the courage to employ to its full extent. She had the mark of a scald on her bosom, which a little scarf of blue chenille did not entirely cover: this scar sometimes drew my attention, though not absolutely on its own account. Mademoiselle de Challes, another of my neighbours, was a fully-grown woman, tall, and well formed; she had been very pleasing, and, though no longer a beauty, might be quoted for her grace-

fulness, equal temper, and good-humour. Her sister, Madame de Charly, the handsomest woman of Chambéri, did not learn music; but I taught her daughter, who was yet young, and whose growing beauty promised to equal her mother's, if she had not unfortunately been a little red-haired. I had a scholar at the Visitation, a little French lady, whose name I have forgotten, but who merits a place in my list of preferences. She had adopted the slow, drawling tone of the nuns, in which voice she would utter some very keen things, which did not in the least appear to correspond with her manner; but she was indolent, and could not generally take pains to show her wit, that being a favour she did not grant to every one. After a month or two of negligent attendance, this was an expedient she devised to make me more assiduous, for I could not easily persuade myself to be so. When with my scholars, I was fond enough of teaching, but could not bear the idea of being obliged to attend at a particular hour; constraint and subjection in every shape are to me insupportable, and alone sufficient to make me hate even pleasure itself. It is said that in Mohammedan countries a man passes through the streets at daybreak bidding husbands awake and fulfil their duty to their wives. I should be a poor sort of Turk at such times.

I had some scholars likewise among the tradespeople, and, among others, one who was the indirect cause of a change of relationship, which, as I have promised to declare all, I must relate in its place. She was the daughter of a grocer, and was called Mademoiselle Lard, a perfect model for a Grecian statue, and whom I should quote for the handsomest girl I have ever seen, if true beauty could exist without life or soul. Her indolence, reserve, and insensibility were inconceivable; it was equally impossible to please or make her angry, and I am convinced that had any one formed a design upon

her virtue, he might have succeeded, not through her inclination, but her stupidity. Her mother, who would run no risk of this, did not leave her for a single moment. In having her taught to sing and providing a young master, she had hoped to enliven her, but it all proved ineffectual. While the master was admiring the daughter, the mother was admiring the master, but this was equally lost labour. Madame Lard added to her natural vivacity that portion of sprightliness which should have belonged to the daughter. She was a sharp little creature, with small sparkling eyes, slightly inflamed, and was marked with small-pox. On my arrival in the morning, I always found my coffee and cream ready, and the mother never failed to welcome me with a sound kiss on the lips, which I would willingly have returned to the daughter, to see how she would have received it. All this was done with such an air of carelessness and simplicity, that even when Monsieur Lard was present her kisses and glances were not omitted. He was a good, quiet fellow, the true original of his daughter, nor did his wife endeavour to deceive him, because there was absolutely no occasion for it.

I received all these caresses with my usual stupidity, taking them only for marks of pure friendship, though they were sometimes troublesome; for the lively Madame Lard was exacting, and if, during the day, I had passed the shop without calling, she would have chided me. It became necessary, therefore, when I had no time to spare, to go out of my way through another street, well knowing it was not so easy to quit her house as to enter it.

Madame Lard thought so much of me that I could not avoid thinking something of her. Her attentions affected me greatly, and I spoke of them to Mamma, without supposing any mystery in the matter, but had there been one I should equally have divulged it, for to have kept

a secret of any kind from her would have been impossible. My heart lay as open to her as to heaven. She did not understand the matter quite so simply as I had done, but saw advances where I only discovered friendship. She concluded that Madame Lard would make a point of not leaving me as great a fool as she found me, and, some way or other, contrive to make herself understood; but, exclusive of the consideration that it was not just that another should undertake the instruction of her pupil, she had motives more worthy of her, wishing to guard me against the snares to which my youth and condition exposed me. Meantime, a more dangerous temptation offered, which I likewise escaped, but which proved to her that such a succession of dangers required every preservative she could possibly apply.

Madame la Comtesse de Menthon, mother to one of my scholars, was a woman of great wit, and reckoned to possess at least an equal share of mischief, having, as was reported, caused a number of quarrels, and, among others, one that terminated fatally for the house of Antremont. Mamma had seen enough of her to know her character; for having, very innocently, pleased some person to whom Madame de Menthon had pretensions, she found her guilty of the crime of this preference, though Madame de Warens had neither sought after nor accepted it, and from that moment endeavoured to play her rival a number of ill turns, none of which succeeded. I shall relate one of the most whimsical, by way of specimen. They were together in the country, with several gentlemen of the neighbourhood, and, among the rest, the aspirant in question. Madame de Menthon took an opportunity to say to one of these gentlemen that Madame de Warens was a précieuse, that she dressed ill, and, particularly, that she covered her neck like a tradeswoman. "Oh, for that matter," replied the person she was speak-

ing to, who was fond of a joke, "she has good reason, for I know she is marked with a great ugly rat on the bosom, so naturally that it even appears to be running." Hatred, as well as love, renders its votaries credulous. Madame de Menthon resolved to make use of this discovery, and one day, while Mamma was at cards with this lady's ungrateful favourite, she took the opportunity of going behind her rival; then drawing back and half-overturning her chair, she dexterously pulled off her mouchoir; but, instead of this hideous rat, the gentlemen beheld a far different object, which it was not more easy to forget than to obtain a sight of, and which by no means answered the intentions of the lady.

I was not calculated to engross the attention of Madame de Menthon, who loved to be surrounded by brilliant company; notwithstanding, she bestowed some attention on me, not for the sake of my person, which she certainly did not regard, but for the reputation of wit which I had acquired, and which might have rendered me useful to her predominant inclination. She had a very lively passion for ridicule, and loved to write songs and lampoons on those who displeased her. Had she found me possessed of sufficient talents to aid the fabrication of her verses, and complaisance enough to do so, we should presently have turned Chambéri upside down. These libels would have been traced to their source, Madame de Menthon would have saved herself by sacrificing me, and I should have been cooped in prison, perhaps, for the rest of my life, as a recompence for having figured as the Apollo of the ladies.

Fortunately, nothing of this kind happened; Madame de Menthon made me stay to dinner twice or thrice, to chat with me, and soon found I was too dull for her purpose. I felt this myself, and was humiliated at the discovery, envying the talents of my friend Venture;

though I should rather have been obliged to my stupidity for keeping me out of the reach of danger. I remained, therefore, for Madame de Menthon her daughter's singing-master, and nothing more; but I lived happily, and was ever well received at Chambéri, which was a thousand times more desirable than passing for a wit with her, and for a serpent with everybody else.

However this might be, Mamma saw that in order to save me from the perils of youth, it was now necessary to treat me as a man. This she immediately set about, but in the most extraordinary manner that any woman, in similar circumstances, ever devised. I all at once perceived that her manner was graver, and her discourse more moral than usual. To the playful gaiety with which she used to intermingle her instructions suddenly succeeded a uniformity of manner, neither familiar nor severe, but which seemed to prepare me for some explanation. After having vainly racked my brain for the reason of this change, I mentioned it to her. This she had expected, and immediately proposed a walk to our garden the next day. Accordingly, we went there the next morning; she had contrived that we should remain alone the whole day, which she employed in preparing me for those favours she meant to bestow — not as another woman would have done, by scheming and coquetry, but by discourses full of sentiment and reason, rather tending to instruct than seduce, and which spoke more to my heart than to my senses. Meantime, however excellent and to the purpose these discourses might be, and though far enough from coldness or melancholy, I did not listen to them with all the attention they merited, nor fix them in my memory as I should have done at any other time. That air of preparation which she had adopted gave me a degree of inquietude; while she spoke, in spite of myself I was thoughtful and absent,

less attentive to what she said than curious to know what she aimed at; and, no sooner had I comprehended her design, which I could not easily do, than the novelty of the idea, which during all the years I had passed with her had never once entered my imagination, took such entire possession of me that I was no longer capable of minding what she said. I only thought of her; I heard her no longer.

Thinking to render young minds attentive to what you would tell them by proposing some highly interesting object as the result of it, is an error instructors frequently run into, and one which I myself have not avoided in my *Émile.* The young pupil, struck with the object presented to him, is occupied only with that, and, leaping lightly over your preliminary discourses, fixes at once on the point, to which, in his idea, you lead him too tediously. To render him attentive, he must be prevented from seeing your design beforehand; and, in this particular Mamma behaved with awkwardness. By a singularity which adhered to her systematic disposition, she took the vain precaution of proposing conditions; but the moment I knew the purchase I no longer even heard them, but immediately consented to everything; and I doubt whether there is a man on the whole earth who would have been frank or courageous enough to dispute terms, or one single woman who would have pardoned such a dispute. By a continuation of the same whimsicality, she attached a number of the gravest formalities to the agreement, and gave me eight days to think of them, which I assured her I had no need of, though that assurance was far from the truth; for, to complete this assemblage of singularities, I was very glad to have this intermission; so much had the novelty of these ideas struck me, and such disorder did I feel in mine, that it required time to arrange them.

It will be supposed that these eight days appeared to me as many ages; on the contrary, I should have been very glad if they had lasted so long. I find it difficult to describe the state in which I found myself; it was a strange chaos of fear and impatience, dreading what I desired, and even studying some fair pretext to evade my happiness. Let my ardent and amorous temperament be remembered, my blood inflamed, my heart intoxicated with love, my health and vigour, my time of life; let it be remembered that, filled with greedy desires, I had never been really intimate with women; that imagination, necessity, vanity, and curiosity united to devour me with the longings to be a man and to appear one; above all, let it not be forgotten that my strong and tender attachment to her, far from having diminished, had daily gained additional strength; let it be considered that I was only happy when with her, and quitted her only to meditate on her excellences; that my heart was full, not only of her bounty, of her amiable disposition, but of her sex, of her person, of herself; in a word, conceive me united to her by every affinity that could possibly render her dear; nor let it be supposed that, being ten or twelve years older than myself, she began to grow an old woman, or was so in my opinion. From the time, five or six years before, when the first sight of her had made such a fond impression on me, she had really altered very little, and in my mind not at all. To me she was ever charming, and was still thought so by every one. Her figure had acquired a slight fulness, but she had the same fine eyes, the same clear complexion, the same bosom, the same features, the same beautiful light hair, the same gaiety, and even the same voice, whose youthful and silvery sound made so lively an impression on my heart that, even to this day, I cannot hear without emotion a young woman's voice that is at all harmonious.

Naturally, what I had most to fear in waiting for the possession of so lovely a person was anticipation, an inability to govern sufficiently my desires and my imagination, so as to remain master of myself. It will be seen that, in a more advanced age, the bare idea of some trifling favours I had to expect from the person I loved inflamed me so far that I could not support with any degree of patience the time necessary to traverse the short space that separated us. How, then, by what miracle — when in the flower of my youth — had I so little impatience for the first enjoyment? How could I see the moment advancing with more pain than pleasure? Why, instead of transports that should have intoxicated me, did I experience almost fear and repugnance? I have no doubt that if I could have avoided this happiness with any degree of decency I should have relinquished it with all my heart. I have promised to relate extravagances in the history of my attachment to her; this certainly is one that no one can have expected.

The reader, already disgusted, supposes that, being already possessed by another, she degraded herself in my opinion by this participation, and that a sentiment of disesteem weakened those she had before inspired me with; but he is mistaken. True, this participation gave me a cruel uneasiness, as well from a very natural sentiment of delicacy, as because it appeared unworthy both of her and myself; but, as to my sentiments for her, they were still the same, and I can solemnly aver that I never loved her more tenderly than when I felt so little desire to possess her. I was too well acquainted with the chastity of her heart and the iciness of her constitution to suppose for a moment that the gratification of the senses had any influence in this abandonment of herself. I was perfectly sure that her careful attention to tearing me from dangers otherwise inevitable, and keeping me

entirely to myself and my duties, made her infringe one which she did not regard from the same point of view as other women, of which more will be said hereafter. I pitied her, and pitied myself. I had an inclination to tell her 'No, Mamma, it is not necessary; I can answer for myself without it.' But I dared not — first, because it was a thing not to be said, and that I inwardly knew in my heart was not true; that, in fact, a woman was necessary to keep me from other women, and secure me from temptation. Without longing to possess her, I was glad that she prevented me from wishing to possess others; so much did I look on everything which could divert me from her as a misfortune.

The habit of living a long time innocently together, far from weakening the first sentiments I felt for her, had contributed to strengthen them, giving a more lively, a more tender, but at the same time a less sensual, turn to my affection. Having ever accustomed myself to call her 'Mamma,' and enjoying the familiarity of a son, it became natural to consider myself as such; and I am inclined to think this was the true reason of my lack of eagerness for the possession of a person I so tenderly loved; for I can perfectly recollect that my emotions on first seeing her, though not more lively, were more voluptuous. At Annecy I was intoxicated, at Chambéri I was no longer so. I always loved her as passionately as possible, but I now loved her more for herself and less on my own account; or, at least, I rather sought for happiness than pleasure in her company. She was more to me than a sister, a mother, a friend, or even than a mistress; in a word, I loved her too much to covet her; such is the clearest idea in my mind.

This day, more dreaded than hoped for, at length arrived. I promised everything that was required of me, and I kept my word: my heart confirmed my engage-

ments without desiring the prize. I obtained it, nevertheless. I found myself for the first time in the arms of a woman — of a woman, too, whom I adored. Was I happy? No: I tasted pleasure. I know not what invincible sadness empoisoned its relish; it seemed that I had committed an incest, and two or three times, pressing her eagerly in my arms, I deluged her bosom with my tears. As for her, she was neither sad nor sprightly; she was caressing and calm. Little inclined to sensuality, she did not seek for gross pleasures, did not experience their delights, nor ever felt the remorse that often follows them.

I repeat it, all her failings were the effect of her errors, never of her passions. She was well born, her heart was pure; she loved good manners, her desires were regular and virtuous, her taste delicate; she seemed formed for that elegant purity of manners which she ever loved, but never practised, because, instead of listening to the dictates of her heart, she followed those of her reason, which led her astray. When false principles drew her from the right path, her true sentiments have always veiled them. Unhappily, she piqued herself on philosophy, and the morals she drew from thence clouded the genuine purity of her heart.

Monsieur de Tavel, her first lover, was her instructor in this philosophy, and the principles he instilled into her mind were such as tended to seduce her. Finding her cold and impregnable on the side of her passions, and firmly attached to her husband and her duty, he attacked her by sophisms, endeavouring to prove that the list of duties she thought so sacred was but a sort of catechism, fit only for children; that the union of the sexes, was, in itself, absolutely indifferent; that all the morality of conjugal faith consisted in opinion, the contentment of husbands being the only reasonable rule of duty in wives;

consequently, that concealed infidelities, doing no injury, could be no crimes; in a word, he persuaded her that the sin consisted only in the scandal, that woman being really virtuous who took care to appear so. Thus the deceiver obtained his end in subverting the reason of a girl whose heart he found it impossible to corrupt, and received his punishment in a devouring jealousy, being persuaded that she treated him as he had prevailed on her to treat her husband. I do not know whether he was mistaken in this respect: the Minister Perret passed for his successor; all I know is that the coldness of temperament which it might have been supposed would have kept this young woman from embracing this system, in the end prevented her from renouncing it. She could not conceive how so much importance should be given to what seemed to have none for her; nor could she honour with the name of virtue an abstinence which cost her so little.

She did not, therefore, give in to this false principle on her own account, but for the sake of others; and that from another maxim almost as false as the former, but more consonant to the generosity of her disposition. She was persuaded that nothing could attach a man so truly to any woman as possession, and though she was only susceptible of friendship, this friendship was so tender that she made use of every means which depended on her to secure the objects of it, and, which is very extraordinary, almost always succeeded; for she was so truly amiable that an increase of intimacy was sure to discover additional reasons for loving her. Another thing worthy of remark is, that after her first folly she only favoured the unfortunate. Lovers in a more brilliant station lost their labour with her, but the man who at first attracted her pity must have possessed very few good qualities if in the end he did not obtain her affection. Even when she made an unworthy choice, far from proceeding from

base inclinations, which were strangers to her noble heart, it was the effect of a disposition too generous, humane, compassionate, and sensible, which she did not always govern with sufficient discernment.

If some false principles misled her, how many admirable ones did she not possess, which never forsook her! By how many virtues did she atone for her failings! if we can call by that name errors in which the senses had so little share. The man who in one particular deceived her so completely had given her excellent instructions in a thousand others; and her passions, far from turbulent, permitting her to follow the dictates of reason, she ever acted wisely when her sophisms did not intervene. Her motives were laudable even in her failings. False principle might lead her to do ill, but she never did anything which she conceived to be wrong. She abhorred lying and duplicity, was just, equitable, humane, disinterested, true to her word, her friends, and those duties which she conceived to be such; incapable of hatred or revenge, and not even conceiving that there was a merit in pardoning; in fine — to return to those qualities which were less excusable — though she did not properly value, she never made a vile barter of her favours: she lavished, but never sold them, though continually reduced to expedients for a subsistence; and I dare assert that, if Socrates could esteem Aspasia, he would have respected Madame de Warens.

I am well aware that in ascribing sensibility of heart with coldness of temperament to the same person, I shall generally, and with some reason, be accused of a contradiction. Perhaps Nature blundered, and this combination ought not to have existed; I only know it did exist. All those who knew Madame de Warens, a great number of whom are yet living, have had opportunities of knowing this was a fact; I dare even aver she had

but one pleasure in the world, which was pleasing those she loved. Let every one argue on the point as he likes, and gravely prove that this cannot be; my business is to declare the truth, and not to enforce belief.

I learned by degrees the particulars I have just related in those conversations which succeeded our union, and alone rendered it delicious. She was right when she concluded her complaisance would be useful to me: I derived great advantages from it in point of instruction. Hitherto she had used me as a child; she now began to treat me as a man, and spoke of herself. Everything she said was so interesting, and I was so sensibly touched with it, that, reasoning with myself, I applied these confidential relations to my own improvement, and received more instruction from them than from her teaching. When we truly feel that the heart speaks, our own opens to hear its voice; nor can all the pompous morality of a pedagogue have half the effect that is produced by the tender, affectionate, and artless conversation of a sensible woman on him who loves her.

The intimacy in which I lived with her having placed me more advantageously in her opinion than formerly, she began to think, notwithstanding my awkward manner, that I deserved cultivation for the polite world, and that, if I could one day show myself there in an eligible situation, I should soon be able to make my way. In consequence of this idea, she set about forming not only my judgment, but my address, endeavouring to render me amiable as well as estimable; and if it be true that success in this world is consistent with strict virtue — which, for my part, I do not believe — I am certain there is no other road than that she had taken and wished to point out to me. For Madame de Warens knew mankind, and understood exquisitely well the art of treating all ranks, without falsehood and without imprudence, neither de-

ceiving nor provoking them; but this art was rather in her disposition than her precepts; she knew better how to practise than explain it; and I was of all the world the least calculated to become master of such an attainment. Accordingly, the means employed for this purpose were nearly lost labour, as well as the pains she took to procure me a fencing and a dancing master. Though easy in movement, without clumsiness, and well made, I could never learn to dance a minuet; for, being plagued with corns, I had acquired a habit of walking on my heels, which Roche could never break me of; and never, without an appearance of effort, could I jump an ordinary ditch. It was still worse at the fencing-school, where, after three months' practice, I made but very little progress, and could never attempt fencing with any but my master. My wrist was not supple enough, nor my arm sufficiently firm to retain the foil, whenever he chose to make it fly out of my hand. Added to this, I had a mortal aversion both to the art itself and to the person who undertook to teach it to me, nor should I ever have imagined that any one could have been so proud of the science of slaying men. To bring his vast genius within the compass of comprehension, he explained himself by comparisons drawn from music, of which he understood nothing. He found striking analogies between a hit in *quarte* or *tierce* with the intervals of music which bear these names. When he made a feint he cried out, 'Take care of this *diesis*,' because anciently they called the *diesis* a *feint*; and when he made the foil fly from my hand, he would add with a sneer that this was a *pause*. In a word, I never in my life saw a more insupportable pedant than this poor fellow, with his *plumet* and his *plastron*.

I made, therefore, but little progress in my exercises, which I presently quitted from pure disgust; but I suc-

ceeded better in an art of more value — namely, that of being content with my situation, and not desiring one more brilliant, for which I began to be persuaded Nature had not designed me. Given up to the endeavour of rendering Mamma happy, I was ever best pleased when in her company, and notwithstanding my fondness for music, began to grudge the time I employed in giving lessons to my scholars.

I am ignorant whether Anet perceived the full extent of our intimacy, but I am inclined to think he was no stranger to it. He was a young man of great penetration, and still greater discretion; who never belied his sentiments, but did not always speak them. Without giving me the least hint that he was acquainted with the matter, he appeared by his conduct to be so; nor did this moderation proceed from baseness of soul, but, having entered entirely into the principles of his mistress, he could not reasonably disapprove of the natural consequences of them. Though as young as herself, he was so grave and thoughtful that he looked on us as two children who required indulgence, and we regarded him as a respectable man, whose esteem we had to preserve. It was not until after she was unfaithful to Anet that I learned the strength of her attachment to him. As she was fully sensible that I only thought, felt, or lived for her, she let me see therefore how much she loved him, that I might love him likewise, and dwelt less on her friendship than on her esteem for him, because this was the sentiment that I could most fully share. How often has she affected our hearts, and made us embrace with tears, by assuring us that we were both necessary to her happiness! Let not women read this with an ill-natured smile; with the temperament she possessed, this necessity was not equivocal, it was only that of the heart.

Thus there was established, among us three, a society

without example, perhaps, on the face of the earth. All our wishes, our cares, our very hearts were for each other, and absolutely confined to this little circle. The habit of living together, and living exclusively from the rest of the world, became so strong, that if at our repasts one of the three were wanting, or a fourth person came in, everything seemed deranged; and, notwithstanding our particular attachments, even our *tête-à-tête* meetings were less agreeable than our reunion. What banished constraint was a lively reciprocal confidence, and dulness could find no place among us, because we were fully employed. Madame de Warens, always projecting, always busy, left us no time for idleness, though, indeed, we had each sufficient employment on our own account. It is my maxim, that idleness is as much the pest of society as of solitude. Nothing more contracts the mind, or engenders more tales, mischief, gossiping, and lies, than for people to be eternally shut up in the same apartment together, and reduced, from the want of employment, to the necessity of an incessant chat. When every one is busy, unless you have really something to say, you may continue silent; but, if you have nothing to do, you must absolutely speak continually, and this, in my mind, is the most burthensome and the most dangerous constraint. I will go farther, and maintain that, to render company harmless, as well as agreeable, it is necessary, not only that each should have something to do, but something that requires a degree of attention. Knitting, for instance, is absolutely as bad as doing nothing; you must take as much pains to amuse a woman whose fingers are thus employed as if she sat with her arms across; but let her embroider, and it is a different matter: her occupation is sufficient to fill up the intervals of silence. What is most disgusting and ridiculous, during these intermissions of conversation, is to see, perhaps, a dozen overgrown

fellows get up, sit down again, walk backwards and forwards, turn on their heels, play with the chimney ornaments, and rack their brains to maintain an inexhaustible chain of words. What a charming occupation! Such people, wherever they go, must be troublesome both to others and themselves. When I was at Motiers, I used to employ myself in making laces with my neighbours, and, were I again to mix with the world, I would always carry a cup-and-ball in my pocket, and would sometimes play with it the whole day, that I might not be constrained to speak when I had nothing to discourse about. If every one would do the same, mankind would be less mischievous, their company would become more rational, and, in my opinion, a vast deal more agreeable. In a word, let wits laugh as they please, but I maintain that the only practical lesson of morality within the reach of the present age is that of the cup-and-ball.

However, they did not give us the trouble of studying expedients to avoid weariness when by ourselves, for a troop of importunate visitors gave us too much by their company, to feel any when alone. The annoyance they formerly gave me had not diminished; all the difference was that I now found less opportunity to abandon myself to my dissatisfaction. Poor Mamma had not lost her old predilection for schemes and systems. On the contrary, the more she felt the pressure of her domestic necessities, the more she endeavoured to extricate herself from them by visionary projects; and, in proportion to the decrease of her present resources, she contrived to enlarge in idea those of the future. Increase of years only strengthened this folly: as she lost her relish for the pleasures of the world and youth, she replaced it by an additional fondness for secrets and projects. Her house was never clear of quacks, contrivers of new manufactures, alchemists, projectors of all kinds, whose discourse began by a dis-

tribution of millions, and concluded by a request for a crown-piece. No one went from her empty-handed; and what astonished me most was how she could so long support such profusion without exhausting the source, or wearying her creditors.

Her principal project at the time I am now speaking of — not the most unreasonable of those she favoured — was that of establishing a Royal Botanic Garden at Chambéri, with a demonstrator attached to it. It will be unnecessary to add for whom this office was designed. The situation of this town, in the midst of the Alps, was extremely favourable to botany, and Mamma, who was always for helping out one project with another, proposed that a College of Pharmacy should be added; which really would have been a very useful foundation in so poor a country, where apothecaries are almost the only medical practitioners. The retirement of the chief physician Grossi to Chambéri, on the demise of King Victor, seemed to favour this idea, or, perhaps, first suggested it. However this may be, by flattery and attention she set about managing Grossi, who, in fact, was not very manageable, being the most caustic and brutal, for a man who had any pretensions to the quality of a gentleman, that ever I knew. The reader may judge for himself by two or three traits which I shall add by way of specimen.

He assisted one day at a consultation with some other doctors, and among the rest was a young gentleman from Annecy, who was physician in ordinary to the sick person. This young man — being but indifferently taught for a doctor — was bold enough to differ in opinion from Monsieur Grossi, who only answered him by asking him when he should return, which way he meant to take, and what conveyance he should make use of. The other, having satisfied Grossi in these particulars, asked him if there

were anything he could serve him in. 'Nothing, nothing,' answered he; 'only I shall place myself at a window in your way, that I may have the pleasure of seeing an ass ride on horseback.' His avarice equalled his riches and want of feeling. One of his friends wanted to borrow some money of him on good security. 'My friend,' answered he, shaking him by the arm, and grinding his teeth, 'should St. Peter descend from heaven to borrow ten pistoles of me, and offer the Trinity as surety, I would not lend them.' One day, being invited to dinner with Comte Picon, Governor of Savoy, who was very religious, he arrived before it was ready, and found his excellency busy at his devotions, who proposed to him the same employment. Not knowing how to refuse, he knelt down with a frightful grimace, but had hardly recited two Aves when, not able to contain himself any longer, he rose hastily, snatched his hat and cane, and, without speaking a word, made off. Comte Picon ran after him, crying, 'Monsieur Grossi! Monsieur Grossi! stop; there's a most excellent partridge on the spit for you.' 'Monsieur le Comte,' replied the other, turning his head, 'though you should give me a roasted angel, I would not stay.' Such was Monsieur le Proto-médecin Grossi, whom Mamma undertook and succeeded in taming. Though his time was very much occupied, he accustomed himself to come frequently to her house, conceived a friendship for Anet, seemed to think him intelligent, spoke of him with esteem, and, what would not have been expected from such a brute, affected to treat him with respect, wishing to efface the impressions of the past; for, though Anet was no longer on the footing of a domestic, it was known that he had been one, and nothing less than the countenance and manner of the chief physician was necessary to set an example of respect which would not otherwise have been paid him. Thus, Claude Anet, with a black coat,

a well-dressed wig, a grave, decent behaviour, a circumspect conduct, a tolerable knowledge in medical and botanical matters, and the patronage of the chief of the faculty, might reasonably have hoped to fill, with universal satisfaction, the place of Royal Demonstrator of Botany, had the proposed establishment taken place. Grossi, indeed, highly approved of the plan, and only waited an opportunity to propose it to the administration, whenever a return of peace should permit them to think of useful institutions, and enable them to spare the necessary pecuniary supplies.

But this project, whose execution would probably have plunged me into botanical studies, for which I am inclined to think Nature designed me, failed through one of those unexpected strokes which frequently overthrow the best concerted plans. I was destined to become by degrees an example of human misery; and it might be said that Providence, who called me to these extraordinary trials, put aside every obstacle that could prevent my encountering them. In an excursion which Anet made to the top of the mountain to seek for génipi, a rare plant that grows only on the Alps, and which Monsieur Grossi had occasion for, he unfortunately heated himself so much that he was seized with a pleurisy which génipi could not relieve, though said to be specific in that disorder; and, notwithstanding all the art of Grossi, who certainly was very skilful, and all the care of his good mistress and myself, he died on the fifth day of his disorder, in the most cruel agonies. During his illness he had no exhortations but mine, bestowed with such transports of grief and zeal that, had he been in a state to understand them, they must have been some consolation to him. Thus I lost the firmest friend I ever had; a man estimable and extraordinary, in whom Nature supplied the defects of education, and who, though in a state of

servitude, possessed all the virtues essential to a great man, which, perhaps, the world would have acknowledged him to be, had he lived and possessed opportunities.

The next day I spoke of him to Mamma with the most sincere and lively sense of affliction; when, suddenly, in the midst of our conversation, the vile, unworthy thought occurred that I should inherit his wardrobe, and particularly a handsome black coat, which I thought very becoming. As I thought this, I consequently uttered it; for when with her, to think and to speak was the same thing. Nothing could have made her feel more forcibly the loss she had sustained than this mean and odious observation, disinterestedness and greatness of soul being qualities which the deceased had eminently possessed. The poor woman turned from me, and, without any reply, burst into tears. Dear and precious tears; their reprehension was fully felt; they ran into my very heart, washing from thence even the smallest traces of such despicable and unworthy sentiments, never to return.

This loss caused Mamma as much inconvenience as sorrow, since from this moment her affairs were still more deranged. Anet was extremely exact, and kept everything in order: his vigilance was universally feared, and this restrained profusion. She herself, to avoid his censure, kept her dissipation within bounds; his attachment was not sufficient, she wished to preserve his esteem, and avoid the just remonstrances he sometimes took the liberty to make, by representing that she squandered the property of others as well as her own. I thought as he did — nay, I even sometimes expressed myself to the same effect, but had not an equal ascendency over her, and my advice did not make the same impression. On his decease I was obliged to occupy his place, for which I had as little inclination as ability, and therefore filled it ill. I was not sufficiently careful, and so very timid that,

though I frequently found fault with myself, I suffered matters to take their own course; besides, though equal confidence was reposed in me, I had not the same authority. I saw the disorder that prevailed, trembled at it, sometimes complained, but was never attended to. I was too young and lively to have any pretension to the exercise of reason, and, when I would have acted the censor, Mamma, calling me her little Mentor, with two or three playful slaps on the cheek, brought me back to my proper self.

An idea of the certain distress into which her ill-regulated expenses, sooner or later, must necessarily plunge her, made a stronger impression on me since I had become the inspector of her household, and had a better opportunity of calculating the inequality that subsisted between her income and her expenditure. I even date from this period the beginning of that inclination to avarice of which I have ever since been sensible. I was never foolishly prodigal, except by intervals; but till then I was never concerned whether I had much or little money. I now began to pay more attention to this circumstance, taking care of my purse, and becoming mean from a laudable motive; for I only sought to insure to Mamma some resource against that catastrophe which I foresaw. I feared her creditors would seize her pension, or that it might be discontinued, and she reduced to want, when I foolishly imagined that the trifle I could save might be of essential service to her; but, to accomplish this, it was necessary I should conceal what I meant to make a reserve of; for it would have been an awkward circumstance, while she was driven to expedients, to let her know that I had a little hoard. Accordingly, I sought out some hiding-places, where I laid up a few louis, resolving to augment this stock from time to time, till I had a convenient opportunity to lay it at her feet; but I

was so incautious in the choice of my repositories that she always discovered them, and, to convince me that she did so, changed the gold I had concealed for a larger sum in different pieces. Ashamed of these discoveries, I brought back to the common purse my little treasure, which she never failed to lay out in clothes or other things for my use, such as a silver-hilted sword, watch, or the like.

Being convinced that I should never succeed in accumulating money, and that what I could save would furnish but a very slender resource, I concluded that there was no other way of averting the threatened misfortune save placing myself in such a situation that I might be enabled to provide for her, whenever she, through lack of means, should be unable to provide for me. Unhappily, seeking these resources on the side of my inclinations, I foolishly determined to consider music as my principal dependence; and ideas of harmony rising in my brain, I imagined that, if placed in a proper situation to profit by them, I should acquire celebrity, and presently become a modern Orpheus, whose tunes would attract all the riches of Peru. As I began to read music tolerably well, the question was, how I should learn composition. The difficulty lay in meeting with a good master, for with the assistance of my 'Rameau' alone I despaired of ever being able to accomplish it; and, since the departure of Monsieur le Maître, there was nobody in Savoy who understood anything of the principles of harmony.

I am now about to relate another of those inconsequences of which my life is full, and which have so frequently carried me directly from my designs, even when I thought myself immediately within reach of them. Venture had spoken to me in very high terms of the Abbé Blanchard, who had taught him composition; a deserving man, possessed of great talents, who was music-

master to the Cathedral at Besançon, and is now in that capacity at the Chapel of Versailles. I therefore determined to go to Besançon, and take some lessons from the Abbé Blanchard; and the idea appeared so rational to me that I soon brought Mamma to the same opinion. She set about the preparations for my journey, in the same style of profusion with which all her plans were executed. Thus this project for preventing a bankruptcy, and repairing in future the waste of dissipation, began by causing her to expend eight hundred francs; her ruin being accelerated that I might be put in a condition to prevent it. Foolish as this conduct may appear, the illusion was complete on my part, and even on hers; for I was persuaded that I wrought for her emolument, and she thought she was highly promoting mine.

I expected to find Venture still at Annecy, and to obtain a recommendatory letter from him to the Abbé Blanchard; but he had left that place, and I was obliged to content myself in the room of it with a mass in four parts, of his composition, which he had left with me. With this recommendation I set out for Besançon, by way of Geneva, where I saw my relations; and through Nyon, where I saw my father, who received me in his usual manner, and promised to forward my portmanteau, which, as I travelled on horseback, came after me. I arrived at Besançon, and was kindly received by the Abbé Blanchard, who promised me his instruction, and offered his services in any other particular. We had just set about our music, when I received a letter from my father, informing me that my portmanteau had been seized and confiscated at Les Rousses, a French barrier on the side of Switzerland. Alarmed at the news, I employed the acquaintance I had formed at Besançon to learn the motive of this confiscation. Being certain there was nothing contraband among my baggage, I could not con-

ceive on what pretext it could have been seized; at length, however, I learned the facts, which, being curious, must not be omitted.

I became acquainted at Chambéri with a very worthy old man, from Lyons, named Monsieur Duvivier, who had been employed at the Visa, under the Regency, and, for want of other business, now assisted at the Survey. He had lived in the polite world, possessed talents, was good-humoured, and understood music. As we both wrote in the same chamber, we preferred each other's acquaintance to that of the unlicked cubs that surrounded us. He had some correspondents at Paris, who furnished him with those little nothings, those daily novelties, which circulate, one knows not why, and die, one cares not when, without any one thinking of them longer than they are heard. As I sometimes took him to dine with Mamma, he in some measure treated me with respect, and, wishing to render himself agreeable, endeavoured to make me fond of these trifles, for which I had naturally such a distaste that I never in my life read any of them. Unhappily one of these accursed papers happened to be in the waistcoat pocket of a new suit, which I had only worn two or three times to prevent its being seized by the commissioners of the customs. This paper contained an insipid Jansenist parody on the great scene in Racine's *Mithridate*. I had not read ten lines of it, but by forgetfulness left it in my pocket, and this caused all my necessaries to be confiscated. The commissioners, at the head of the inventory of my portmanteau, set a most pompous procès-verbal, in which it was taken for granted that this manuscript came from Geneva for the sole purpose of being printed and distributed in France, and then ran into holy invectives against the enemies of God and the Church, and praised the pious vigilance of those who had prevented the execution of this infernal machination.

They doubtless found also that my shirts smelt of heresy, for, on the strength of this dreadful paper, they were all seized, and from that time I never received any account of my unfortunate portmanteau. The revenue officers whom I applied to for this purpose required so many instructions, informations, certificates, memorials, and so forth, that, lost a thousand times in the perplexing labyrinth, I was constrained to abandon them entirely. I feel a real regret for not having preserved the procès-verbal issued from the office of Les Rousses, for it was a piece calculated to hold a distinguished rank in the collection which is to accompany this work.

This loss immediately brought me back to Chambéri, without having learned anything of the Abbé Blanchard. Reasoning with myself on the events of this journey, and seeing that misfortunes attended all my enterprises, I resolved to attach myself solely to Mamma, to share her fortune, and distress myself no longer about future events, which I could not regulate. She received me as if I had brought back treasures, replaced by degrees my little wardrobe, and, though this misfortune fell heavily enough on both, it was forgotten almost as suddenly as it arrived.

Though this mischance had rather damped my musical ardour, I did not leave off studying my 'Rameau,' and, by repeated efforts, was at length able to understand it, and to make some little attempts at composition, the success of which encouraged me to proceed. The Comte de Bellegarde, son to the Marquis of Antremont, had returned from Dresden, after the death of King Augustus. Having long resided at Paris, he was fond of music, and particularly that of Rameau. His brother, the Comte de Nangis, played on the violin; Madame la Comtesse de la Tour, their sister, sang tolerably. This rendered music the fashion at Chambéri, and a kind of public concert

was established there, the direction of which was at first designed for me; but they soon discovered that I was not competent to the undertaking, and it was otherwise arranged. Notwithstanding this, I continued writing a number of little pieces in my own way, and, among others, a cantata, which gained great approbation; it could not, indeed, be called a finished piece, but the airs were written in a style of novelty, and produced a good effect, which was not expected from me. These gentlemen could not believe that, reading music so indifferently, it was possible I should compose any that was passable, and made no doubt that I had taken to myself the credit of some other person's labours. Monsieur de Nangis, wishing to be assured of this, called on me one morning with a cantata by Clérambault which he had transposed, as he said, to suit his voice, and to which another bass was necessary, the transposition having rendered that of Clérambault impracticable. I answered that it required considerable labour, and could not be done on the spot. Being convinced that I only sought an excuse, he pressed me to write at least the bass to a recitative. I did so — not well, doubtless, because, to attempt anything with success, I must have both time and freedom — but I did it according to rule, and he could not doubt my knowledge of the elements of composition. I did not, therefore, lose my scholars, though it blunted my passion for music to think that there should be a concert at Chambéri in which I was not necessary.

About this time, peace being concluded, the French army repassed the Alps. Several officers came to visit Mamma, and among others the Comte de Lautrec, Colonel of the regiment of Orléans, since Plenipotentiary of Geneva, and afterwards Marshal of France, to whom she presented me. On her recommendation he appeared to interest himself greatly in my behalf, promising a

great deal, which he never remembered till the last year of his life, when I no longer stood in need of his assistance. The young Marquis de Sennecterre, whose father was then Ambassador at Turin, passed through Chambéri at the same time, and dined one day at Madame de Menthon's, when I happened to be among the guests. After dinner, the discourse turned upon music, which the Marquis understood extremely well. The opera of *Jephté* was then new. He mentioned this piece; it was brought him, and he made me tremble by proposing to execute it between us. He opened the book at that celebrated double chorus,

'La terre, l'enfer, le ciel même,
Tout tremble devant le Seigneur!'

He said, 'How many parts will you take? I will undertake these six.' I had not yet been accustomed to this trait of French vivacity, and, though acquainted with partitions, could not comprehend how one man could undertake to perform six, or even two, parts at the same time. Nothing has cost me more trouble in music than to skip lightly from one part to another, and have the eye at once on the whole partition. By the manner in which I evaded this trial, Monsieur de Sennecterre must have been inclined to believe that I did not understand music, and perhaps it was to satisfy himself in this particular that he proposed my noting a song that he wished to present to Mademoiselle de Menthon, in such a manner that I could not avoid it. He sang his song, and I wrote from his voice, without giving him much trouble to repeat it. When finished, he read my performance, and said — which was true — that it was very correctly noted. He had observed my embarrassment, and now seemed to enhance the merit of this little success. In reality, I then understood music very well, and only wanted that quick-

ness at first sight which I possess in no one particular and which is only to be acquired in this art by long and constant practice. Be that as it may, I was fully sensible of his kindness in endeavouring to efface from the minds of others, and even from my own, the embarrassment I had experienced on this occasion. Twelve or fifteen years afterwards, meeting this gentleman at several houses in Paris, I was often tempted to remind him of this anecdote, and show him that I still remembered it; but he had lost his sight in the interval, I feared to give him pain by recalling to his memory how useful it formerly had been to him, and was therefore silent.

I now touch upon the moment that binds my past existence to the present; some friendships of that period, prolonged to the present time, being very dear to me, have frequently made me regret that happy obscurity when those who called themselves my friends were really so — loved me for myself, through pure goodwill, and not from the vanity of being acquainted with a conspicuous character, perhaps for the secret purpose of finding more occasions to injure him. From this time I date my first acquaintance with my old friend Gauffecourt, who, notwithstanding every effort to disunite us, has still remained so. Still remained so! No, alas! I have just lost him! but his affection terminated only with his life — death alone could put a period to our friendship. Monsieur de Gauffecourt was one of the most amiable men that ever existed; it was impossible to see him without affection, or to live with him without feeling a sincere attachment. In my life I never saw features more expressive of frankness, kindness, and serenity, or that marked more feeling, more understanding, or inspired greater confidence. However reserved one might be, it was impossible even at first sight to avoid being as free with him as if he had been an acquaintance of twenty

years; for myself, who find so much difficulty to be at ease among new faces, I was familiar with him in a moment. His manner, accent, and conversation perfectly suited his features. The sound of his voice was clear, full, and musical; it was an agreeable and expressive bass, which satisfied the ear, and sounded upon the heart. It was impossible to possess a more equal and pleasing vivacity, or more real and unaffected gracefulness, more natural talents, or cultivated with greater taste. Join to all these good qualities an affectionate heart, but loving rather too diffusively, and bestowing his favours with too little caution; serving his friends with zeal, or rather making himself the friend of every one he could serve, yet contriving very dexterously to manage his own affairs while warmly pursuing the interests of others. Gauffecourt was the son of a simple clockmaker, and had been a clockmaker himself. His person and talents, however, soon called him to a superior situation. He became acquainted with Monsieur de la Closure, the French Resident at Geneva, who conceived a friendship for him, and procured him some connections at Paris, which were useful, and through whose influence he obtained the privilege of furnishing the salts of Valais, which was worth twenty thousand livres a year. This very amply satisfied his wishes with respect to fortune, but with regard to women there was more difficulty, — he had a wide field in which to choose, and chose accordingly. What renders his character more remarkable, and does him greater honour, is that though connected with all conditions he was universally esteemed and sought after without being envied or hated by any one, and I really believe he passed through life without a single enemy. Happy man! He went every year to the baths of Aix, where the best company from the neighbouring countries resorted, and, being on terms of friendship with all the nobility of

Savoy, came from Aix to Chambéri to see the Count de Bellegarde and his father, the Marquis of Antremont. It was here that Mamma met him and introduced me to him, and this acquaintance, which appeared at that time to end in nothing, after many years had elapsed was renewed on an occasion which I shall relate, when it became a real friendship. I apprehend I am sufficiently authorised in speaking of a man to whom I was so firmly attached; but, even had I no personal interest in what concerned him, he was so truly amiable, and born with so many natural good qualities, that, for the honour of human nature, I should think it necessary to preserve his memory. This man, estimable as he was, had, like all other mortals, some failings, as will be seen hereafter; perhaps, had it not been so, he would have been less amiable, since, to render him as interesting as possible, it was necessary he should sometimes act in such a manner as to require a small portion of indulgence.

Another connection of the same time, that is not yet extinguished, and continues to flatter me with that idea of temporal happiness which it is so difficult to obliterate from the human heart, is Monsieur de Conzié, a Savoyard gentleman, then young and amiable, who had a fancy to learn music, or rather to be acquainted with the person who taught it. With great understanding and taste for polite acquirements, Monsieur de Conzié possessed a mildness of disposition which rendered him extremely attractive, especially to myself, who always like persons of his character. Our friendship was soon formed.[1] The seeds of literature and philosophy which began to ferment in my brain, and only waited for culture and emulation in order to spring up, found in him

[1] I have seen him since, and have found him wholly transformed. What a great magician is Monsieur de Choiseul! None of my old acquaintances have escaped his metamorphoses. — R.

exactly what was wanting. Monsieur de Conzié had no great inclination to music, and this was useful to me, for the hours destined for lessons were passed anyhow save musically: we breakfasted, chatted, and read new publications — not a word of music. The correspondence between Voltaire and the Prince-Royal of Prussia then made a noise in the world, and these celebrated men were frequently the subject of our conversation, one of whom, recently seated on a throne, already indicated what he would prove himself hereafter; while the other, as much decried as he is now admired, made us sincerely lament the misfortunes that seemed to pursue him, and which are so frequently the appanage of superior talents. The Prince of Prussia had not been happy in his youth, and it appeared that Voltaire was destined never to be so. The interest we took in both parties extended to all that concerned them, and nothing that Voltaire wrote escaped us. The inclination I felt for these performances inspired me with a desire to write elegantly, and caused me to endeavour to imitate the beautiful style of that author, with whom I was enchanted. Some time after, his *Lettres Philosophiques* appeared. Though certainly not his best work, it greatly augmented my fondness for study; this was a rising inclination, which from that time has never been extinguished.

But the moment was not yet arrived when I should give myself up to it entirely: my rambling disposition, rather contracted than eradicated, being kept alive by our manner of living at Madame de Warens', which was too bustling for one of my solitary temper. The crowd of strangers who daily swarmed about her from all parts, and the certainty I felt that these people sought only to dupe her — each in his particular mode — rendered home a torment. Since I had succeeded Anet in the confidence of his mistress, I had strictly examined her circumstances,

and saw their evil tendency with horror. I had remonstrated a hundred times, prayed, argued, conjured, but all to no purpose. I had thrown myself at her feet, and strongly represented the catastrophe that threatened her; had earnestly entreated that she would reform her expenses, and begin with myself; representing that it was better to suffer something while she was yet young, than, by multiplying her debts and creditors, to expose her old age to vexation and misery. Sensible of the sincerity of my zeal, she was frequently affected, and would then make the finest promises in the world. But only let an artful schemer arrive, and in an instant all her good resolutions were forgotten. After a thousand proofs of the inefficacy of my remonstrances, what remained but to turn away my eyes from the ruin I could not prevent, and fly myself from the door I could not guard! I made, therefore, little journeys to Nyon, Geneva, and Lyons, which diverted my mind in some measure from this secret uneasiness, though it increased the cause by these additional expenses. I can truly aver that I should have acquiesced with pleasure in every retrenchment, had Mamma really profited by it; but, being persuaded that what I might refuse myself would be distributed among a set of interested villains, I took advantage of her easiness to partake with them, and, like the dog returning from the shambles, carried off a portion of that morsel which I could not protect.

Pretences were not wanting for all these journeys; even Mamma would alone have supplied me with more than were necessary, having plenty of connections, negotiations, affairs, and commissions, which she wished to have executed by some trusty hand. In these cases she usually applied to me; I was always willing to go, and consequently found occasions enough to furnish out a rambling kind of life. These excursions procured me some

good connections, which have since been agreeable or useful to me. Among others, I met at Lyons with Monsieur Perrichon, whose friendship I accuse myself of not having sufficiently cultivated, considering the kindness he had for me; and that of good Parisot, which I shall speak of in its place; at Grenoble, that of Madame Deybens and Madame la Présidente de Bardonanche, a woman of great understanding, and who would have entertained a friendship for me, had it been in my power to see her oftener; at Geneva, that of Monsieur de la Closure, the French Resident, who often spoke to me of my mother, the remembrance of whom neither death nor time had erased from his heart; likewise those of the two Barillots, the father, who was very amiable, a good companion, and one of the most worthy men I ever met, calling me his grandson. During the troubles of the Republic these two citizens took contrary sides, the son siding with the people, the father with the magistrates. When they took up arms in 1737 I was at Geneva, and saw the father and son quit the same house armed, the one going to mount guard at the Hôtel de Ville, the other to his quarters, almost certain to meet face to face in the course of two hours, and prepared to give or receive death from each other. This unnatural sight made so lively an impression on me that I solemnly vowed never to interfere in any civil war, nor assist in deciding any internal dispute by arms, either personally or by my influence, should I ever enter into my rights as a citizen. I can bring proofs of having kept this oath on a very delicate occasion, and it will be confessed — at least I should suppose so — this moderation was of some worth.

But I had not yet arrived at that fermentation of patriotism which the first sight of Geneva in arms has since excited in my heart, as may be conjectured by a very grave fact that will not tell to my advantage, which

I forgot to put in its proper place, but which ought not to be omitted.

My uncle Bernard died in Carolina, where he had been employed for some years in the building of Charlestown, of which he had formed the plan. My poor cousin, too, died in the Prussian service; thus my aunt lost, nearly at the same period, her son and husband. These losses re-animated in some measure her affection for the nearest relative she had remaining, which was myself. When I went to Geneva, I made her house my home, and amused myself with rummaging and turning over the books and papers my uncle had left. Among them I found some curious ones, and some letters of the importance of which they had little knowledge. My aunt, who set no store by these dusty papers, would willingly have given the whole to me, but I contented myself with two or three books, with notes written by the Minister Bernard, my grandfather, and among the rest the posthumous works of Rohault, in quarto, the margins of which were full of excellent commentaries, which gave me an inclination to mathematics. This book remained among those of Madame de Warens, and I have ever since lamented that I did not preserve it. To these I added five or six *mémoires* in manuscript, and a printed one, composed by the famous Micheli Ducret, a man of great talent, learned and enlightened, but too much inclined to political agitation, for which he was cruelly treated by the magistrates of Geneva, and lately died in the fortress of Arberg, where he had been confined for many years, for being, as it was said, concerned in the conspiracy of Berne.

This *mémoire* was a judicious critique on the extensive but ridiculous plan of fortification which had been partially carried out at Geneva, though laughed at by every person of judgment in the art who was unacquainted with the secret motives of the Council in the execution of

this magnificent enterprise. Monsieur Micheli, who had been excluded from the committee of fortification for having condemned this plan, thought that, as a citizen and a member of the Two Hundred, he might give his advice at large, and therefore did so in this *mémoire*, which he was imprudent enough to have printed, though he never published it, having only those copies struck off which were meant for the Two Hundred, and which were all intercepted at the post-office by order of the minor Council. I found this *mémoire* among my uncle's papers, with the answer he had been ordered to make to it, and took both. This was soon after I had left my place at the Survey, and I yet remained on good terms with the Advocate Coccelli, who had the management of it. Some time after, the director of the custom-house entreated me to stand godfather to his child, with Madame Coccelli, who was to be godmother. Proud of being placed on such terms of equality with the Advocate, I strove to assume importance, and show myself worthy of that honour.

Full of this idea, I thought I could do nothing better than show him Micheli's *mémoire* in print, which was really a scarce piece, and would prove I was connected with people of consequence in Geneva, who were intrusted with the secrets of the State; yet, by a kind of reserve which I should find it difficult to account for, I did not show him my uncle's answer, perhaps because it was manuscript, and nothing less than print was worthy to approach the Advocate. He understood, however, so well the importance of this paper, which I had the folly to put into his hands, that I could never after get it into my possession, and being convinced that every effort for that purpose would be ineffectual, I made a merit of my forbearance, transforming the theft into a present. I made no doubt that this writing — more curious, how-

ever, than useful — answered his purpose at the Court of Turin, where probably he took care to be reimbursed in some way or other for the expense which the acquisition of it might be supposed to have cost him. Happily, of all future contingencies, the least probable is that the King of Sardinia should ever besiege Geneva; but, as that event is not absolutely impossible, I shall ever reproach my foolish vanity with having been the means of pointing out the greatest defect of that city to its most ancient enemy.

I passed three or four years in this manner, between music, magistery, projects, and journeys, floating incessantly from one object to another, and wishing to fix myself, though I knew not on what, but insensibly inclining towards study. I was acquainted with men of letters, I had heard them speak of literature, and sometimes mingled in the conversation, yet rather adopted the jargon of books than the knowledge they contained. In my excursions to Geneva I frequently called on my good old friend Monsieur Simon, who greatly promoted my rising emulation by fresh news from the republic of letters, extracted from Baillet or Colomiés. I frequently saw, too, at Chambéri, a Dominican professor of physic, a good kind of friar, whose name I have forgotten, who often made little chemical experiments which greatly amused me. In imitation of him, and aided by Ozanam's *Récréations Mathématiques*, I attempted to make some sympathetic ink; and having for that purpose more than half filled a bottle with quicklime, orpiment, and water, I corked it tightly. The effervescence immediately became extremely violent; I ran to unstop the bottle, but had not time to effect it, for during the attempt it burst in my face like a bomb, and I swallowed so much of the orpiment and lime that it nearly cost me my life. I remained blind for six weeks, and by the event of this

experiment learned to meddle no more with experimental chemistry while its elements were unknown to me.

This adventure happened very unluckily for my health, which, for some time past, had been visibly on the decline. This was rather extraordinary, as I was guilty of no kind of excess; nor could it have been expected from my make, for my chest, being well formed and rather capacious, seemed to give my lungs full liberty to play; yet I was short-breathed, felt a very sensible oppression, sighed involuntarily, had palpitations of the heart and spitting of blood, accompanied with a low fever, which I have never since entirely overcome. How is it possible to fall into such a state in the flower of one's age, without any inward decay, or without having done anything to destroy health?

It is sometimes said that the sword wears the scabbard: this was truly the case with me. The violence of my passions both kept me alive and hastened my dissolution. What passions? will be asked. Mere nothings; the most trivial objects in nature, but which affected me as forcibly as if the acquisition of a Helen, or of the throne of the universe, were at stake. In the first place, women. Possessed of one, my senses were satisfied — my heart, never. Extreme longings devoured me even in the moment of fruition. I had a tender mother, a cherished friend, but sighed for a mistress; my fancy painted her as such, and gave her a thousand forms, that I might deceive myself. Had I believed that I was holding Mamma in my embrace when I really did so, I should not have clasped her less warmly, but my sensual desires would have vanished. I should have sobbed with tenderness, but enjoyment would have been lacking. Enjoyment! Is man formed to taste it? Ah! if it had ever in my life been granted that but for a moment only I was to experience the full delights of love, I cannot conceive

that my frail being could endure the trial: I should expire at the supreme moment.

I was therefore dying for love without an object, and this condition, perhaps, is, of all others, the most dangerous. I was likewise uneasy — tormented at the bad state of poor Mamma's circumstances, and the imprudence of her conduct, which could not fail to bring her in a short time to total ruin. My tortured imagination, which ever foreruns misfortunes, continually beheld this in its utmost excess, and in all its consequences. I already saw myself forced by want to quit her to whom I had consecrated my future life, and without whom I could not hope for happiness. Thus was my soul continually agitated; longings and fears devoured me alternately.

Music was a passion less turbulent, but no less consuming, from the ardour with which I attached myself to it; by the persistent study of the obscure books of Rameau; by an invincible resolution to charge my memory with rules it could not retain; by continual application, and by vast compilations which I frequently passed whole nights in copying. But why dwell on these particularly, while every folly that took possession of my wandering brain, the most transient ideas of a single day — a journey, a concert, a supper, a walk, a novel to read, a play to see, things in the world the least premeditated in my pleasures or occupation — became for me the most violent passions, which, by their ridiculous impetuosity, inflicted the most serious torments? Even the imaginary misfortunes of Cleveland,[1] read with avidity and frequent interruption, have, I am persuaded, disordered me more than my own.

There was a Genevese, named Bagueret, who had been employed under Peter the Great, at the Court of

[1] *Histoire de Monsieur Cléveland*, by the Abbé Prévost.

Russia, one of the most worthless, senseless fellows I ever met with, full of projects as foolish as himself, which were to rain down millions, but if they came to nothing he was in no way disconcerted. This man, having come to Chambéri on account of some suit pending before the Senate, immediately sought acquaintance with Mamma, and with great reason on his side, since, for those imaginary trifles which he bestowed with prodigality, he gained in exchange the unfortunate crown-pieces, one by one, out of her pocket. I did not like him, and he plainly perceived this, for with me it is not a very difficult discovery, nor did he spare any sort of meanness to gain my goodwill, and, among other things, proposed teaching me to play at chess, of which game he understood something. I made an attempt, though almost against my inclination, and, after several efforts, having learned the elements of the game, my progress was so rapid that before the end of the first sitting I gave him the defeat which in the beginning he had given me. Nothing more was necessary; behold me fascinated with chess! I buy a board and the treatise of 'Le Calabrois,' [1] and, shutting myself up in my chamber, pass whole days and nights in studying all the varieties of the game, being determined, by playing alone without end or relaxation, to drive them into my head in spite of myself. After incredible efforts, during two or three months passed in this curious employment, I go to the coffee-house, thin, sallow, and almost stupid. I seat myself, and again attack Monsieur Bagueret. He beats me once, twice, twenty times; so many combinations were fermenting in my head, and my imagination was so stupefied, that all appeared confusion. I tried to exercise myself with Philidor's or Stamma's book of instructions,

[1] Gioachino Greco, a famous master of the game in the time of Louis XIV.

but I was still equally perplexed, and, having exhausted myself with fatigue, was further to seek than ever, and, whether I abandoned my chess for a time or resolved to revive my knowledge by unremitted practice, it was the same thing. I could never advance one step beyond the improvement of the first sitting, and always returned in a circle to where I had begun. I should practise for countless ages, with the result of being able to win a game from Bagueret — no more. 'A fine employment of your time!' the reader will say. And not a little time have I so employed. My first endeavours ceased only because I had not strength of mind and body to continue them. When I left my room I had the air of one arisen from the grave, and, if this course of life had lasted, I should not have been long among the living. It will be acknowledged that it would be strange, especially in respect of one like me, in the ardour of youth, that so active a brain could coincide with a healthy constitution.

The alteration of my brain had an effect on my temper, moderating the ardour of my fantasies, for as I grew weaker they became more tranquil, and I even lost, in some measure, my rage for travelling. I was not seized with heaviness, but melancholy; vapours succeeded passions, languor became sorrow. I wept and sighed without cause, and felt my life ebbing away before I had enjoyed it. I trembled to think of the perilous situation in which I should leave my poor Mamma; and I can truly say that quitting her, and leaving her in these melancholy circumstances, was my only concern. At length I fell quite ill, and was nursed by her as never mother nursed a child. The care she took of me was of real utility to her affairs, since it diverted her mind from schemes, and kept projectors at a distance. How pleasing would death have been at that time, when, if I had not tasted many of the pleasures of life, I had felt but few of its misfortunes!

My tranquil soul would have taken its flight, without having experienced those cruel ideas of the injustice of mankind which embitter both life and death. I should have enjoyed the sweet consolation that I still survived in the dearer part of myself. It could hardly have been called death; and had I been divested of my uneasiness on her account, it would have appeared but a gentle sleep; yet even these disquietudes had such an affectionate and tender turn, that their bitterness was tempered by a pleasing sensibility. I said to her, 'You are the depository of my whole being; act so that I may be happy.' Two or three times, when my disorder was violent, I crept to her apartment to give her my advice respecting her conduct: and I dare affirm that these admonitions were both wise and equitable, the interest I took in her future concerns being most strongly marked. As if tears had been both nourishment and medicine, I found myself the better for those I shed with her, while seated on her bedside, and holding her hands between mine. The hours crept insensibly away in these nocturnal discourses. I returned to my chamber better than I had quitted it, being satisfied and calmed by the promises she made, and the hopes with which she had inspired me. I slept on them with my heart at peace, and fully resigned to the dispensations of Providence. God grant, after having had so many reasons to hate life, after being agitated with so many storms, after it has even become a burden, that death, which must terminate all, may be no more terrible than it would have been at that moment!

By inconceivable care and vigilance she saved my life; and I am convinced that she alone could have done this. I have little faith in the skill of physicians, but rely greatly on the assistance of real friends, and am persuaded that being easy in those particulars on which our happiness depends is more salutary than any other application. If

there is a sensation in life peculiarly delightful, we experienced it in being restored to each other; our mutual attachment did not increase, for that was impossible, but it became, I know not how, more intimately tender in its utter simplicity. I became a creature formed by her, wholly her child — more so than if she had been my veritable mother; we got into the habit, though without design, of being continually with each other, and enjoying, in some measure, our whole existence together, feeling reciprocally that we were not only necessary, but entirely sufficient for each other's happiness. Accustomed to think of no subject foreign to ourselves, our happiness and all our desires were confined to that pleasing and singular union, which perhaps has had no equal, which is not, as I have before observed, love, but a sentiment more essential, depending neither on the senses, sex, age, or figure, but closely related to all that composes our rational existence, and which can cease only with our being.

How was it that this delightful crisis did not secure our mutual felicity for the remainder of her life and mine? I have the consoling conviction that it was not my fault, neither was it hers — at least not wilfully. It was decreed that invincible nature was soon to regain its empire. But this fatal return was not suddenly accomplished: there was, thank Heaven, a short but precious interval, that did not conclude by my fault, and which I cannot reproach myself with having employed amiss.

Though recovered from my dangerous illness, I did not regain my strength; my chest was weak, some remains of the fever kept me in a languishing condition, and the only inclination I had was to end my days near one so truly dear to me; to confirm her in those good resolutions she had formed; to convince her in what consisted the real charms of a happy life, and, as far as

depended on me, to render hers so; but I foresaw that in a gloomy, melancholy house, the continual solitude of our own society would at length become too dull and monotonous. A remedy presented itself: Mamma had prescribed milk for me, and insisted that I should take it in the country. I consented, provided she would accompany me: nothing more was necessary to gain her compliance, and whither we should go was all that remained to be determined on. Our suburban garden was not properly in the country, being surrounded by houses and other gardens, and possessing none of those attractions so desirable in a rural retreat; besides, after the death of Anet, we had given up that place from economical principles, feeling no longer a desire to rear plants, and other views making us not regret the loss of that little retreat.

Taking advantage of the distaste I found she began to conceive for the town, I proposed to abandon it entirely, and settle ourselves in an agreeable solitude, in some small house, distant enough from the city to avoid the importunity of idle visitors. She was ready to follow my advice, and this plan, which her good angel and mine suggested, might fully have secured our happiness and tranquillity till death had divided us; but this was not the state we were appointed to. Mamma was destined to endure all the sorrows of indigence and discomfort, after having passed her life in abundance, that she might learn to quit it with the less regret; and I myself, by an assemblage of misfortunes of all kinds, was to become a striking example to him who, inspired with a love of justice and the public good, and trusting implicitly to his own innocence, shall openly dare to assert truth to mankind, unsupported by cabals, or without having formed parties to protect himself.

An unhappy fear restrained her: she did not dare to

quit her ill-contrived house, for fear of displeasing the proprietor. 'Your proposed retirement is charming,' said she, 'and much to my taste, but in our retreat we need maintenance. In quitting this dungeon, I hazard losing the very means of life, and, when these fail us in the woods, we must again return to seek them in the town. That we may have the least possible cause for being reduced to this point, let us not leave our house entirely, but pay this small pension to the Comte de Saint-Laurent, that he may suffer mine to continue. Let us seek some little habitation, far enough from the town to be at peace, yet near enough to return when obliged to do so.' This mode was finally adopted; and, after some small search, we fixed on Les Charmettes, on an estate belonging to Monsieur de Conzié, at a very small distance from Chambéri; but as retired and solitary as if it had been an hundred leagues off. The spot we had concluded on is a valley, between two tolerably high hills, which run north and south; at the bottom, among the trees and pebbles, flows a rivulet, and halfway up the ascent, on either side, are scattered a number of houses, forming a beautiful retreat for those who love a peaceful, romantic asylum. After having examined two or three of these houses, we chose that which we thought the most pleasing, which was the property of a gentleman of the army, called Monsieur Noiret. This house was in good condition: before it a terrace garden; below that, on the declivity, an orchard; and on the slope behind the house, a vineyard; a little wood of chestnut-trees opposite; a fountain hard by, and higher up the hill meadows for the cattle; — in short, all that could be thought necessary for the country retirement we proposed to establish. To the best of my remembrance we took possession of it towards the latter end of the summer of 1736. I was transported with delight when we retired to rest there

for the first time. 'O Mamma!' said I to this dear friend, embracing her with tears of tenderness and joy, 'this is the abode of happiness and innocence; if we do not find them here in each other's society, it will be in vain to seek them elsewhere.' [1]

[1] The house in which Rousseau and Madame de Warens resided at Les Charmettes bears the following lines, which Hérault de Séchelles caused to be inscribed upon it in 1792, when he held the office of Commissary of the Convention in the Department of Mont Blanc: —

'Réduit par Jean-Jacque habité,
Tu me rappelles son génie,
Sa solitude, sa fierté,
Et ses malheurs et sa folie.

À la gloire, à la vérité
Il osa consacrer sa vie,
Et fut toujours persécuté
Ou par lui-même, ou par l'envie.'

BOOK VI

[1736]

Hoc erat in votis: modus agri non ita magnus,
Hortus ubi, et tecto vicinus jugis aquæ fons;
Et paulûm sylvæ super his foret. . . .

I CANNOT add —

Auctius atque
Dî melius fecere;[1]

but no matter, the former is enough; I had no occasion to have any property there, it was sufficient that I enjoyed it; for I have long since both said and felt that the proprietor and possessor are often two very different people, even leaving husbands and lovers out of the question.

Here begins the short happiness of my life, those peaceful and happy moments which have given me the right to say that I have lived. Precious and ever-regretted moments! Ah! recommence your delightful course; pass more slowly through my memory, if possible, than you actually did in your fugitive succession. How shall I prolong, according to my inclination, this recital, at once so pleasing and simple? How shall I continue to relate the same occurrences, without wearying my readers with the repetition, any more than I was satiated with the enjoyment? Again, if all this consisted of facts, actions, or words, I could somehow or other convey an idea of it; but how shall I describe what was neither said nor done, nor even thought, but enjoyed, felt, without being able

[1] Horace, bk. ii. *Sat. 6.*

to particularise any other object of my happiness than the bare idea? I rose with the sun, and was happy; I walked, and was happy; I saw Mamma, and was happy; I quitted her, and still was happy! Whether I rambled through the woods, over the hills, or strolled along the valley; read, was idle, worked in the garden, gathered fruits, or assisted in household duties, happiness continually accompanied me; it was fixed on no assignable object; it was within me, nor could I depart from it a single moment.

Nothing that passed during that charming epoch, nothing that I did, said, or thought, has escaped my memory. The time that preceded or followed it I only recollect by intervals, unequally and confused; but here I remember all as distinctly as if it existed at this moment. Imagination, which in my youth was perpetually anticipating the future, but now takes a retrograde course, makes some amends by these charming recollections for the deprivation of hope, which I have lost for ever. I no longer see anything in the future that can tempt my wishes; it is a recollection of the past alone that can flatter me, and the remembrance of the period I am now describing is so true and lively that it sometimes makes me happy, even in spite of my misfortunes.

Of these recollections I shall relate one example, which may give some idea of their force and precision. The first day we went to sleep at Les Charmettes, the way being up-hill, and Mamma rather heavy, she was carried in a chair, while I followed on foot. Fearing the chairmen would be fatigued, she got out about half-way, designing to walk the rest. As we passed along she saw something blue in the hedge, and said, 'There's some periwinkle in flower yet!' I had never seen any before, nor did I stoop to examine this: my sight is too short to distinguish plants on the ground, and I only cast a look

at this as I passed. An interval of nearly thirty years had elapsed before I saw any more periwinkle, at least before I observed it, when, being at Cressier, in 1764, with my friend Monsieur du Peyrou, we went up a small mountain, on the summit of which he has a pretty building which he rightly calls Belle-Vue. I was then beginning to herborise. Walking and looking among the bushes, I exclaimed with rapture, 'Ah! there's some periwinkle!' — such, indeed, it was. Du Peyrou, who perceived my transport, was ignorant of the cause, but will some day be informed, I hope, on reading this. The reader may judge by this impression, made by so small an incident, what an effect must have been produced by every occurrence of that time.

Meantime, the air of the country did not restore my health. I was languishing, and became more so. I could not endure milk, and was obliged to discontinue the use of it. Water was at this time the fashionable remedy for every complaint; accordingly I entered on a course of it, and so indiscreetly that it almost released me, not only from my illness, but also from my life. Every morning on rising I went to the spring, carrying a large goblet, from which, while walking to and fro, I imbibed as much as would fill a couple of wine-bottles. I abstained altogether from wine at meal-times. The water I drank was rather hard and difficult to pass, as mountain water generally is; in short, I managed so well, that in the course of two months I totally ruined my stomach, which until then had been very good, and, no longer digesting anything properly, had no reason to expect a cure. At this time an accident happened, as singular in itself as in its subsequent consequences, which can only terminate with my existence.

One morning, being no worse than usual, while putting up the leaf of a small table, I felt a sudden and almost

inconceivable revolution throughout my whole frame. I know not how to describe it better than as a kind of tempest, which suddenly rose in my blood, and spread in a moment over every part of my body. My arteries began beating so violently that I not only felt their motion, but even heard it, particularly that of the carotids, attended by a loud noise in my ears, which was of three, or rather four, distinct kinds. For instance, first a grave, hollow buzzing; then a more distinct murmur, like the running of water; then an extremely sharp hissing, attended by the beating I have mentioned, and whose throbs I could easily count, without feeling my pulse, or putting a hand to any part of my body. This internal tumult was so violent that it destroyed my former acuteness of hearing, and rendered me henceforth not wholly, but partially deaf.

My surprise and fear may easily be conceived. Imagining it was a stroke of death, I went to bed, and, the physician being sent for, I related my case, trembling with apprehension, and judging myself past all cure. I believe the doctor was of the same opinion; however, he performed his office, running over a long string of causes and effects beyond my comprehension, after which, in consequence of this sublime theory, he set about, *in anima vili*, the experimental part of his art; but the means he was pleased to adopt in order to effect a cure were so troublesome, disgusting, and inoperative that I soon discontinued them, and after some weeks, finding I was neither better nor worse, left my bed and returned to my usual mode of living; but the beating in my arteries and the buzzing in my ears have never quitted me for a moment during the thirty years which have elapsed since that time.

Till now I had been a great sleeper, but a total deprivation of repose, with other alarming symptoms which have

accompanied it, even to this time, persuaded me I had but a short time to live. This idea tranquillised me for a time. I became less anxious about a cure, and, being persuaded I could not prolong life, determined to employ the remainder of it as usefully as possible. This was practicable by a particular indulgence of nature, which, in this melancholy state, exempted me from sufferings which it might have been supposed I should have experienced. I was incommoded by the noise, but felt no pain, nor was it accompanied by any habitual inconvenience, except nocturnal wakefulness, and at all times a shortness of breath, which is not violent enough to be called an asthma, but was troublesome when I attempted to run, or use any degree of exertion.

This accident, which seemed to threaten the dissolution of my body, only killed my passions, and I have reason to thank Heaven for the happy effect produced by it on my soul. I can truly say I only began to live when I considered myself dead; for, estimating at their real value those things I was quitting, I began to employ myself on nobler objects, namely, by anticipating those I hoped shortly to have the contemplation of, and which hitherto I had too much neglected. I had often made light of religion, but was never totally devoid of it; consequently, it cost me less pain to employ my thoughts on that subject, which is generally thought melancholy, though highly pleasing to those who make it an object of hope and consolation. Mamma was more useful to me on this occasion than all the theologians in the world could have been.

She, who brought everything into a system, had not failed to do as much by religion; and this system was composed of ideas that bore no affinity to each other. Some were extremely good, and others very ridiculous, being made up of sentiments proceeding from her disposition, and prejudices derived from education. Believers,

in general, make God like themselves: the virtuous make Him good, and the profligate make Him wicked; ill-tempered and bilious devotees see nothing but hell, because they would willingly damn all mankind; while loving and gentle souls would fain disbelieve it altogether; and one of the astonishments I could never overcome is to see the good Fénelon speak of it in his *Télémaque* as if he really gave credit to it; but I hope he lied in that particular, for, however strict he might be with regard to truth, a bishop absolutely must lie sometimes. Mamma lied not when expressing her opinion to me, and that soul without gall, who could not imagine a revengeful and ever-angry God, saw only clemency and forgiveness where devotees beheld justice and punishment. She frequently said there would be no justice in God should He be strictly just to us; because, not having bestowed what was necessary to render us essentially good, it would be requiring more than He had given. A whimsical idea of hers was that, not believing in hell, she was firmly persuaded of the reality of purgatory. This arose from her not knowing what to do with the wicked, being loth to damn them utterly, nor yet caring to place them with the good till they had become so; and we must really allow that, both in this world and the next, the wicked are very troublesome company.

Another extravagance: — It is seen that the doctrine of original sin and redemption of mankind is destroyed by this system; consequently that the basis of Christianity, as generally received, is shaken, and that the Catholic faith at any rate cannot subsist with these principles. Mamma, notwithstanding, was a good Catholic, or, at least, professed to be one, and certainly desired to become such; but it appeared to her that the Scriptures were too literally and harshly explained, supposing that all we read of everlasting torments were

figurative threatenings, and the death of Jesus Christ an example of charity, truly divine, which should teach mankind to love God and each other. In a word, faithful to the religion she had embraced, she acquiesced in all its professions of faith, but, on a discussion of each particular article, it was plain that her ideas were quite opposed to that Church whose doctrines she professed to believe. In these cases she exhibited simplicity of heart, a frankness more eloquent than sophistry, which frequently embarrassed her confessor — for she disguised nothing from him. 'I am a good Catholic,' she would say, 'and will ever remain so. I adopt with all the powers of my soul the decisions of our holy Mother Church; I am not mistress of my faith, but I am of my will, which I submit to you without reserve; I will endeavour to believe all — what can you require more?'

Had there been no Christian morality established, I am persuaded she would have lived as if regulated by its principles, so perfectly did they seem to accord with her disposition. She did everything that was required; and she would have done the same had there been no such requisition. In things indifferent she was fond of obeying, and had she not been permitted — had she even been prescribed — to eat meat, she would have fasted between God and herself, without prudence having aught to do with the matter. But all this morality was subordinate to the principles of M. de Tavel, or rather she pretended to see nothing in religion that contradicted them; thus she would have bestowed her favours on twenty men in a day, without any idea of a crime, her conscience being no more moved in that particular than her passions. I know that a number of devotees are not more scrupulous, but the difference is, they are seduced by their passions, she was blinded by her sophisms. In the midst of conversations the most affecting, I might

say the most edifying, she would touch on this subject without any change of air or manner, and without being sensible of any contradiction in her opinions. She would have even interrupted her discourse to exchange words for deeds, and resumed it with the former serenity, so much was she persuaded that the whole was only a maxim of social order, and that any person of sense might honestly interpret, apply, or make exceptions, without any danger of offending the Almighty. Though I was far enough from being of the same opinion in this particular, I confess I dared not combat hers; being ashamed of the very ungallant part I must have acted in support of my argument. I should have been glad to establish these rules for others, and excepted myself, but, besides that her constitution sufficiently prevented the abuse of her notions, I know she did not easily change her mind, and that claiming an exception for myself was claiming it for all those who pleased her. For the rest, I add here this inconsequence with others, though it never had any great influence on her conduct, and, at the time I am speaking of, none; but I have promised faithfully to describe her principles, and I will perform my engagement. I now return to myself.

Finding in her all those ideas I had occasion for to secure me from the fears of death and its future consequences, I drew confidence and security from this source; my attachment became more warm than ever, and I would willingly have transmitted to her my whole existence, which seemed ready to abandon me. From this redoubled attachment, a persuasion that I had but a short time to live, and profound security as to my future state, arose an habitual and even pleasing serenity, which, calming every passion that extends our hopes and fears, suffered me to enjoy without inquietude or concern the few days which I imagined remained for me. What

contributed to render them still more agreeable was an endeavour to encourage her rising taste for the country by every amusement I could devise. Seeking to attach her to her garden, poultry, pigeons, and cows, I amused myself with them; and these little occupations, which employed my time without injuring my tranquillity, were more serviceable than a milk diet, or all the remedies bestowed on my poor shattered body, even to effecting the utmost possible re-establishment of it.

The vintage and gathering in our fruit employed the remainder of the year; we became more and more attached to a rustic life, and the society of our honest neighbours. We saw the approach of winter with regret, and returned to the city as if going into exile. To me this change was particularly gloomy, never expecting to see the return of spring, and thinking I took an everlasting leave of Les Charmettes. I did not leave it without kissing the very earth and trees, and casting back many a wistful look. Having left my scholars for so long a time, and lost my relish for company and the amusements of the town, I seldom went out, conversing only with Mamma and a Monsieur Salomon, who had lately become our physician. He was an honest man, of good understanding, a great Cartesian, spoke tolerably well on the system of the world, and his agreeable and instructive conversations were more serviceable than his prescriptions. I could never bear that foolish, trivial mode of conversation which is so generally adopted; but useful, instructive discourse has always given me great pleasure, nor was I ever backward to join in it. I was much pleased with that of Monsieur Salomon; it appeared to me that when in his company I anticipated the acquisition of that sublime knowledge which my soul would enjoy when freed from its mortal fetters. The inclination I had for him extended to the subjects which he treated

on, and I began to look after books which might better enable me to understand his discourse. Those which mingled devotion with science were most agreeable to me, particularly those of the Oratoire and of Port-Royal. I began to read, or rather to devour them. There fell into my hands one written by Père Lamy, called *Entretiens sur les Sciences*, which was a kind of introduction to the knowledge of those books it treated of. I read it over an hundred times, and resolved to make this my guide. In short, I found myself irresistibly drawn, in spite of — or rather by — my ill state of health, towards study, and though looking on each day as the last of my life, read with as much avidity as if certain I was to live for ever. I was assured that reading would injure me; but, on the contrary, I am rather inclined to think it was serviceable, not only to my soul, but also to my body; for this application, which soon became delightful, diverted my thoughts from my disorders, and I soon found myself less affected by them. It is certain, however, that nothing gave me absolute ease; but, having no longer any acute pain, I became accustomed to languishment and wakefulness — to thinking instead of acting; in short, I looked on the gradual and slow decay of my body as inevitably progressive, and only to be terminated by death.

This opinion not only detached me from all the vain cares of life, but delivered me from the importunity of medicine, to which hitherto I had been forced to submit against my will. Salomon, convinced that his drugs were unavailing, spared me the disagreeable task of taking them, and contented himself with amusing the grief of my poor Mamma by some of those harmless preparations which serve to flatter the hopes of the patient, and keep up the credit of the doctor. I discontinued the strict regimen I had latterly observed, resumed the use of

wine, and lived in every respect like a man in perfect health, as far as my strength would permit, very soberly, but not abstinently. I even began to go out and visit my acquaintance, particularly Monsieur de Conzié, whose conversation was extremely pleasing to me. Whether it struck me as heroic to study to my last hour, or that some hopes of life still lingered in the bottom of my heart, I cannot tell, but the apparent certainty of death, far from relaxing my inclination for improvement, seemed to animate it, and I hastened to acquire knowledge for the other world, as if convinced I should only possess what I could carry with me. I took a liking to the shop of a bookseller, named Bouchard, which was frequented by some men of letters, and as the spring, whose return I had never expected to see again, was approaching, furnished myself with some books for Les Charmettes, in case I should have the happiness to return there.

I had that happiness, and enjoyed it to the utmost extent. The rapture with which I saw the trees disclose their first buds is inexpressible! The return of spring seemed to me like rising from the grave into Paradise. The snow was hardly off the ground when we left our dungeon and returned to Les Charmettes, to enjoy the first warblings of the nightingale. I now thought no more of dying, and it is really singular that from this time I never experienced any dangerous illness in the country. I have suffered greatly, but never kept my bed, and have often said to those about me, on finding myself worse than ordinary, 'Should you see me at the point of death, carry me under the shade of an oak, and I promise you I shall recover.'

Though weak, I resumed my country occupations, as far as my strength would permit, and conceived a real grief at not being able to manage our garden without help; for I could not take five or six strokes with the spade

without being out of breath and overcome with perspiration. When I stooped, the beating redoubled, and the blood flew with such violence to my head that I was instantly obliged to stand upright. Being, therefore, confined to less fatiguing employments, I busied myself about the dove-house, and was so pleased with it that I sometimes passed several hours there without feeling a moment's weariness. Pigeons are very timid and difficult to tame, yet I inspired mine with so much confidence that they followed me everywhere, letting me catch them at pleasure; nor could I appear in the garden or the court-yard without two or three on my arms or head in an instant, and, notwithstanding the pleasure I took in them, their company became so troublesome that I was obliged to lessen the familiarity. I have ever taken great pleasure in taming animals, particularly those that are wild and fearful. It appeared delightful to me to inspire them with a confidence which I took care never to abuse, wishing them to love me freely.

I have already mentioned that I carried back some books. I did not forget to read them, but in a manner more proper to fatigue than instruct me. I wrongly imagined that, to read a book profitably, it was necessary to be acquainted with every branch of knowledge it even mentioned; far from thinking that the author had not so much knowledge himself, but drew assistance from other books, as he might see occasion. Full of this silly idea, I was stopped every moment, obliged to run from one book to another, and sometimes, before I could read the tenth page of that I was studying, found myself called upon to exhaust whole libraries. I was so attached to this ridiculous method that I lost a prodigious deal of time, and had bewildered my head to such a degree that I was hardly capable of doing, seeing, or comprehending anything. I fortunately perceived, at length, that I

was in the wrong road, which would entangle me in an inextricable labyrinth, and quitted it before I was irrevocably lost.

When a person has any real taste for the sciences, the first thing he perceives in the pursuit of them is that connection by which they mutually attract, assist, and enlighten each other, and that it is impossible to attain one without the assistance of the rest. Though the human understanding cannot grasp all, and one must ever be regarded as the principal object, yet, if the rest be totally neglected, the chosen study is often veiled in obscurity. I was convinced that my resolution was good and useful in itself, but that it was necessary I should change my method; I therefore had recourse to the *Encyclopédie*. I began by dividing the knowledge contained therein into its various branches, but soon discovered that I must pursue a contrary course, that I must take each separately, and trace it to that point where it united with the rest; thus I returned to the general synthetical method, but returned thither with a conviction that I was going right. Meditation supplied the want of knowledge, and a very natural reflection gave strength to my resolution, which was that, whether I lived or died, I had no time to lose; to know nothing before the age of five-and-twenty, and then resolve to learn everything, was engaging to employ the future time profitably. I was ignorant at what point accident or death might put a period to my endeavours, and resolved at all events to acquire with the utmost expedition some idea of every species of knowledge, as well to try my natural disposition as to judge for myself what most deserved cultivation.

In the execution of my plan I experienced another advantage, of which I had never thought: this was, spending a great deal of time profitably. Nature certainly never meant me for study, since attentive application

fatigues me so much that I find it impossible to employ myself half an hour together intently on one subject, particularly while following another person's ideas, for it has frequently happened that I have pursued my own for a much longer period with success. After reading a few pages of an author who must be followed with close application, my understanding wanders and I become lost in the clouds, and should I obstinately continue, I tire myself to no purpose, I am dazzled and am no longer conscious of what I read; but in a succession of various subjects, one relieves me from the fatigue of the other, and without finding respite necessary, I can follow them with pleasure. I took advantage of this observation in the plan of my studies, taking care to intermingle them in such a manner that I was never weary. It is true that domestic and rural concerns furnished many pleasing relaxations; but as my eagerness for improvement increased, I contrived to find in these opportunities for my studies, frequently employing myself about two things at the same time, without reflecting that both were ill done.

In relating so many trifling details — which delight me, but frequently tire my reader — I make use of a discretion which he would hardly suspect if I did not take care to inform him of it. For example, I recollect with pleasure all the different methods I adopted for the distribution of my time in such a manner as to produce the utmost profit and pleasure. I may say that the portion of my life which I passed in this retirement, though in continual ill-health, was that in which I was least idle and least wearied. Two or three months were thus employed in discovering the bent of my genius; meantime I enjoyed, in the finest season of the year, and in a spot thus rendered delightful, the charms of a life of whose worth I was so highly sensible, a society as free as it was charming — if a union so perfect, and the extensive knowledge

I proposed to acquire, can be called society. It seemed to me as if I already possessed the learning I sought after; or better still, since the pleasure of acquisition constituted a great part of my happiness.

I must pass over these beginnings, which were to me the height of enjoyment, but are too trivial to bear repeating. Again I say, true happiness is indescribable — it is only to be felt, and this consciousness of felicity is proportionately more the less able we are to describe it, because it does not result from a concourse of favourable incidents, but is a permanent condition of the mind. I am frequently guilty of repetitions, but should be infinitely more so did I repeat the same thing as often as it recurs to my mind. When, at length, my variable mode of life was reduced to a more uniform course, the following was nearly the distribution of time which I adopted.

I rose every morning before the sun, and passed through a neighbouring orchard into a pleasant path, which, running above the vineyard, led towards Chambéri. While walking, I offered up my prayers — not by a vain motion of the lips, but a sincere elevation of my heart to the Great Author of delightful Nature, whose beauties were spread out before me. I never liked to pray in a chamber; it seems to me that the walls and all the petty workmanship of man interpose themselves between God and myself. I love to contemplate Him in His works, which elevate my soul, and raise my thoughts to Him. My prayers were pure, I can affirm it, and therefore worthy to be heard. I asked for myself, and her from whom my thoughts were never divided, only an innocent and quiet life, exempt from vice, sorrow, and want; I prayed that we might die the death of the just, and partake of their lot hereafter. For the rest, it was rather admiration and contemplation than request, being satisfied that the best means to obtain what is

necessary from the Giver of every perfect good is rather to deserve than to solicit. Returning from my walk, I lengthened the way by taking a round-about path, still contemplating with earnestness and delight the beautiful scenes with which I was surrounded — those only objects that never fatigue either the eye or the heart. As I approached our habitation I looked forward to see if Mamma was stirring, and when I perceived her shutters open, I ran with joy towards the house. If they were yet shut, I went into the garden to wait their opening, amusing myself meantime by a retrospection of what I had read the preceding evening, or by gardening. The moment the shutter drew back I hastened to embrace her as she lay, frequently half asleep; and this salute, pure as it was affectionate, possessed from its very innocence a charm which the senses can never bestow.

We usually breakfasted on milk-coffee; this was the time of day when we had most leisure, and when we chatted with the greatest freedom. These sittings, which were usually pretty long, have given me a fondness for breakfasts, and I infinitely prefer those of England, or Switzerland, which are considered as a meal, at which all the family assemble, to those of France, where people breakfast alone in their apartments, or more frequently have none at all. After an hour or two passed in discourse, I went to my study till dinner, beginning with some philosophical work, such as the Port-Royal Logic, Locke's *Essays*, Malebranche, Leibnitz, Descartes, etc. I soon found that these authors perpetually contradict each other, and formed the chimerical project of reconciling them, which cost me much labour and loss of time, bewildering my head without any profit. At length, renouncing this idea, I adopted one infinitely more profitable, to which I attribute all the progress I have since made, notwithstanding the defects of my capacity —

for it is certain I had very little for study. In reading each author, I restricted myself to following all his ideas, without suffering my own or those of any other writer to interfere with them, or entering into any dispute on their utility. I said to myself, 'I will begin by laying up a stock of ideas, true or false, but clearly conceived, till my understanding shall be sufficiently furnished to enable me to compare and make choice of those that are most estimable.' I am sensible that this method is not without its inconveniences, but it succeeded in furnishing me with a fund of instruction. Having passed some years in thinking after others, without reflection, and almost without reasoning, I found myself possessed of sufficient materials to set about thinking on my own account; and when journeys or business deprived me of the opportunity of consulting books, I amused myself with recollecting and comparing what I had read, weighing every opinion in the balance of reason, and frequently judging my masters. Though it was late before I began to exercise my judicial faculties, I have not discovered that they have lost their vigour, and, on publishing my own ideas, have never been accused of being a servile disciple, or of swearing *in verba magistri.*

From these studies I passed to the elements of geometry, for I never went further, forcing my weak memory to retain them by going over the same ground a hundred and a hundred times. I did not admire Euclid, who rather seeks a chain of demonstration than a connection of ideas. I preferred the Geometry of Père Lamy, who from that time became one of my favourite authors, and whose works I yet read with pleasure. Algebra followed, and Père Lamy was still my guide. When I made some progress, I perused Père Reynaud's *Science du Calcul*, and then his *Analyse Démontrée*, to which I did not give much attention. I never went far enough thoroughly to

understand the application of algebra to geometry. I was not pleased with this method of performing operations by rule without knowing what I was about: resolving geometrical problems by the help of equations seemed like playing a tune by turning round a handle. The first time that I found by calculation that the square of a binomial figure was composed of the square of each of its parts, and double the product of one by the other, though convinced that my multiplication was right, I could not be satisfied till I had made and examined the figure; not that I do not admire algebra when applied to abstract quantities, but when used to demonstrate dimensions I wished to see the operation worked out by lines; otherwise I could not rightly comprehend it.

After this came Latin: it was my most painful study, and one in which I never made great progress. I began with the Port-Royal method, but without success. Those barbarous verses sickened me, nor could my ear endure them. I lost myself in a crowd of rules, and, in studying the last, forgot all that preceded it. A study of words is not calculated for a man without memory, and it was principally an endeavour to make my memory more retentive that urged me obstinately to persist in this study, which at length I was obliged to relinquish. As I understood enough to read an easy author by the aid of a dictionary, I followed that method, and found it succeeded tolerably well. I likewise applied myself to translation, not by writing, but mentally, and kept to it. By exercise and perseverance I attained to read Latin authors easily, but have never been able to speak or write that language, which has frequently embarrassed me when I have found myself, I know not by what means, enrolled among men of letters. Another inconvenience that arose from this manner of learning was that I never understood prosody, much less the rules of versification; yet,

anxious to understand the harmony of the language, both in prose and verse, I have made many efforts to attain it, but am convinced that without a master it is almost impossible. Having learned the composition of the hexameter, which is the easiest of all verses, I had the patience to measure out the greater part of Virgil into feet and quantity, and whenever I was dubious whether a syllable was long or short, immediately consulted my Virgil. It may easily be conceived that I ran into many errors in consequence of those licences permitted by the rules of versification. It is certain that, if there is an advantage in studying alone, there are also great inconveniences and inconceivable labour, as I know better than any one.

Before noon I quitted my books, and, if dinner was not ready, paid my friends the pigeons a visit, or worked on the garden till it was, and when I heard myself called, ran very willingly, and with a good appetite, to partake of it, for it is very remarkable that, let me be ever so indisposed, my appetite never fails. We dined very agreeably, chatting till Mamma could eat. Two or three times a week, when it was fine, we drank our coffee in a cool, shady arbour behind the house, that I had decorated with hops, and which was very refreshing during the heat; we usually passed an hour in viewing our flowers and vegetables, or in conversation relative to our manner of life, which greatly increased the pleasure of it. I had another little family at the end of the garden; these were several hives of bees, which I never failed to visit once a day, and was frequently accompanied by Mamma. I was greatly interested in their labour, and amused myself in seeing them return from their quest of booty, their little thighs so loaded that they could hardly walk. At first, curiosity made me indiscreet, and they stung me several times, but afterwards we were so well acquainted that, let me

approach as near as I would, they never molested me, though the hives were full and the bees ready to swarm. At these times I have been surrounded, having them on my hands and face without suffering a single sting. All animals are distrustful of man, and with reason; but, when once assured he does not mean to injure them, their confidence becomes so great that he must be worse than a barbarian who abuses it.

After this I returned to my books; but my afternoon employment ought rather to bear the name of recreation and amusement than of labour and study. I have never been able to bear application after dinner, and in general any kind of attention is painful to me during the heat of the day. I employed myself, it is true, but without restraint or rule, and read without studying. What I most attended to at these times was history and geography, and as these did not require attention to disputed points, made as much progress in them as my weak memory would permit. I had an inclination to study Père Pétau, and launched into the mists of chronology, but was disgusted at the critical part, which I found had neither bottom nor banks; this made me prefer the more exact measurement of time and the course of the celestial bodies. I should even have contracted a fondness for astronomy had I been in possession of instruments, but was obliged to content myself with some of the elements of that art, learned from books, and a few rude observations made with a telescope, sufficient only to give me a general idea of the situation of the heavenly bodies; for my short sight is insufficient to distinguish the stars without the help of a glass. I recollect an adventure on this subject, the remembrance of which has often diverted me. I had bought a celestial planisphere to study the constellations by, and, having fixed it on a frame, when the nights were fine, and the sky clear, I went into the garden; and fixing the

frame on four sticks about as tall as myself, which I drove into the ground, turned the planisphere downwards, and contrived to light it by means of a candle, which I put into a pail to prevent the wind from blowing it out, and then placed it in the centre of the above-mentioned four supports; this done, I examined the stars with my glass, and, from time to time referring to my planisphere, endeavoured to distinguish the various constellations. I think I have before observed that Monsieur Noiret's garden was on a terrace; all that was done there was visible from the road. One night some country-people, passing by very late, saw me in a grotesque costume, busily employed in these observations. The light, which struck directly on the planisphere, proceeding from a cause they could not divine, the candle being concealed by the sides of the pail, the four stakes supporting a large paper in a frame, marked over with uncouth figures, with the motion of the telescope, which they saw turning to and fro, gave the whole an air of conjuration that struck them with horror and amazement. My figure was by no means calculated to dispel their fears: a flappel hat put on over my nightcap, and a short wadded cloak about my shoulders, which Mamma had obliged me to put on, presented in their idea the image of a real sorcerer. Being near midnight, they made no doubt but this was the beginning of some witches' Sabbath; and, having no curiosity to pry further into these mysteries, they fled with all possible speed, awakened their neighbours, and described this most dreadful vision. The story spread so fast that the next day the whole neighbourhood was informed that a *sabbat* was held in the garden that belonged to Monsieur Noiret, and I am ignorant what might have been the consequences of this rumour if one of the countrymen who had been witness to my conjurations had not the same day carried his complaint to two Jesuits,

who frequently came to visit us, and who, without knowing the foundation of the story, undeceived and satisfied them. These Jesuits told us the whole affair; I acquainted them with the cause of it, and we laughed heartily. However, to obviate future accidents, I resolved for the future to make my observations without light, and consult my planisphere in the house. Those who have read of Venetian magic in my *Lettres de la Montagne*, may find that I long since had the reputation of being a conjurer.

Such was the life I led at Les Charmettes when I had no rural employments, for they ever had the preference, and in those that did not exceed my strength I worked like a peasant; but my extreme weakness left me little merit except goodwill; besides, I wished to do two things at once, and therefore did neither well. I obstinately persisted in forcing my memory to retain a good deal by heart, and, for that purpose, I always carried some book with me, which, while at work, I studied and re-studied. I am really amazed that the fatigue of these vain and continual efforts did not end by rendering me entirely stupid. I must have learned and re-learned the Eclogues of Virgil twenty times over, though at this time I cannot recollect a single line of them. I have lost or spoiled a great number of books by a custom I had of carrying them with me into the dove-house, the garden, orchard, or vineyard, when, being busy about something else, I laid my book at the foot of a tree or on the hedge; wherever it was I forgot to return for it, and often at the end of a fortnight found it rotted to pieces, or eaten by the ants or snails. This ardour for learning became so far a madness that it rendered me almost stupid, and I was perpetually muttering some passage or other to myself.

The writings of Port-Royal, and those of the Oratoire, being what I most read, had made me half a Jansenist, and, notwithstanding all my confidence, their harsh

theology sometimes alarmed me. A dread of hell, which till then I had never much apprehended, by little and little disturbed my security, and, had not Mamma tranquillised my soul, would at length have been too much for me. My confessor, who was hers likewise, contributed all in his power to keep me tranquil. This was a Jesuit named Père Hemet, a good and wise old man, whose memory I shall ever hold in veneration. Though a Jesuit, he had the simplicity of a child, and his manners, less relaxed than gentle, were precisely what was necessary to balance the melancholy impressions made on me by Jansenism. This good man and his companion, Père Coppier, came frequently to visit us at Les Charmettes, though the road was very rough and tedious for men of their age. These visits were very comfortable to me, which may the Almighty return to their souls, for they were so old that I cannot suppose them yet living. I sometimes went to see them at Chambéri, became acquainted by degrees at their convent, and had free access to the library. The remembrance of that happy time is so connected with the idea of those Jesuits, that I love one on account of the other, and, though I have ever thought their doctrines dangerous, could never find myself in a disposition to hate them cordially.

I should like to know whether there ever passed such childish notions in the hearts of other men as sometimes do in mine. In the midst of my studies, and of a life as innocent as man could lead, notwithstanding every persuasion to the contrary, the dread of hell frequently tormented me. I asked myself, 'What state am I in? Should I die at this instant, must I be damned?' According to my Jansenists the matter was indubitable, but according to my conscience it appeared quite the contrary. Ever terrified and floating in this cruel uncertainty, I had recourse to the most laughable expedients to resolve my

doubts, for which I would willingly shut up any man as a lunatic, should I see him practise the same folly. One day, meditating on this melancholy subject, I exercised myself in throwing stones at the trunks of trees, with my usual dexterity, that is to say, without hitting any of them. In the height of this charming exercise, it entered my mind to make a kind of prognostic that might calm my inquietude. I said, 'I will throw this stone at the tree facing me; if I hit my mark, I will consider it as a sign of salvation; if I miss, as a token of damnation.' While I said this, I threw the stone with a trembling hand and beating heart, but so happily that it fairly struck the body of the tree, which truly was not a difficult matter, for I had taken care to choose one that was very large and very near me. From that moment I have never doubted my salvation. I know not, on recollecting this trait, whether I ought to laugh or shudder at myself. Ye great geniuses, who surely laugh at my folly, congratulate yourselves on your superior wisdom, but insult not my unhappiness, for I swear to you that I feel it most sensibly.

These troubles, these alarms, inseparable perhaps from devotion, were only at intervals; in general I was tranquil, and the impression made on my soul, by the idea of approaching death, was less that of melancholy than a peaceful languor, which even had its pleasures. I have found among my old papers a kind of congratulation and exhortation which I made to myself on dying at an age when I had the courage to meet death with serenity, without having experienced any great evils, either of body or mind. How right I was in this! A preconception of what I had to suffer made me fear to live, and it seemed that I foresaw the fate which must attend my future days. I have never been so near wisdom as during this happy period, when I felt no great remorse for the past, nor

tormenting fear for the future — the reigning sentiment of my soul being the enjoyment of the present. Religious people usually possess a lively sensuality of a minor sort, which makes them highly enjoy those innocent pleasures that are allowed them. Worldlings — I know not why — impute this to them as a crime; or rather, I well know the cause of this imputation: it is because they envy others the enjoyment of those simple delights for which they have lost the relish. I had these inclinations, and found it charming to gratify them in security of conscience. My yet inexperienced heart surrendered itself to all with the calm happiness of a child, or rather, if I dare use the expression, with the raptures of an angel; for in reality these pure delights are as serene as those of paradise. Dinners on the grass at Montagnole, suppers in our arbour, gathering in the fruits, the vintage, peeling hemp with our servants — all these were so many holidays, in which Mamma took as much pleasure as myself. Solitary walks afforded yet purer pleasure, because in them our hearts expanded with greater freedom: one particularly marks an epoch in my memory; it was on the Day of Saint Louis, whose name Mamma bore. We set out together early and unattended, after having heard a mass at break of day in a chapel adjoining our house, said by a Carmelite, who attended for that purpose. As I proposed walking over the hills opposite our dwelling, which we had not yet visited, we sent our provisions on before, the excursion being likely to last the whole day. Mamma, though rather corpulent, did not walk ill, and we rambled from hill to hill and wood to wood, sometimes in the sun, but oftener in the shade, resting from time to time, and regardless how the hours stole away; speaking of ourselves, of our union, of the sweetness of our lot, and offering up prayers for its duration, which were never granted. Everything conspired

to augment our happiness: it had rained recently, there was no dust, the brooks were full and rapid, a gentle breeze agitated the leaves, the air was pure, the horizon free from clouds, serenity reigned in the sky as in our hearts. Our dinner was prepared at a peasant's house, and shared with him and his family, whose benedictions we received. These poor Savoyards — such worthy people! After dinner we regained the shade, and while I was picking up bits of dried sticks to boil our coffee, Mamma amused herself with herborising among the bushes, and, taking the flowers I had gathered for her in my way, she made me remark in their construction a thousand natural beauties, which greatly amused me, and which ought to have given me a taste for botany; but the time was not yet come, and my attention was arrested by too many other studies. Besides this, an idea struck me, which diverted my thoughts from flowers and plants: the situation of my mind at that moment, all that we had said or done that day, every object that had struck me, brought to my remembrance the kind of waking dream I had at Annecy seven or eight years before, and of which I have given an account in its place. The similarity was so striking that it affected me even to tears. In a transport of tenderness I embraced this dear friend. 'Mamma, Mamma,' I exclaimed passionately, 'this day has long since been promised me; I can see nothing beyond it: my happiness, by your means, is at its height; may it never decrease! may it continue as long as I am sensible of its value — then it can only finish with my life.'

Thus happily passed my days, and the more so since, perceiving nothing that could disturb them, I firmly believed that my happiness could only end with my life; not that the cause of my former uneasiness had absolutely ceased, but I saw it take another course which

I directed with my utmost care to useful objects, that the remedy might accompany the evil. Mamma naturally loved the country, and this taste did not cool while with me. By little and little she contracted a fondness for rustic employments, wished to make the most of her land, and had in that particular a knowledge which she practised with pleasure. Not satisfied with what belonged to the house, she hired first a field, then a meadow, transferring her enterprising humour to the objects of agriculture, and, instead of remaining unemployed in the house, was in the way of becoming a complete farmer. I was not greatly pleased to see this passion increase, and endeavoured all I could to oppose it; for I was certain she would be deceived, and that her liberal, extravagant disposition would infallibly carry her expenses beyond her profits. However, I consoled myself by thinking the produce could not be useless, and would, at least, help her to live. Of all the projects she could form, this appeared the least ruinous. Without regarding it, therefore, in the light she did, as a profitable scheme, I considered it as a perpetual employment, which would keep her from ruinous enterprises, and out of the reach of impostors. With this idea, I ardently wished to recover my health and strength, that I might superintend her affairs, oversee her labourers, or rather be the principal one myself. The exercise this naturally obliged me to take, with the relaxation it procured me from books and study, was serviceable to my health.

[1737–1741.] The winter following, Barillot, returning from Italy, brought me some books, and among others the *Bontempi* and the *Cartella per Musica* of Père Banchieri. These gave me a taste for the history of music and for theoretical researches in that pleasing art. Barillot remained some time with us, and, as I had been of

age for some months, I determined to go to Geneva the following spring, and demand my mother's inheritance, or at least that part of it which belonged to me, till it could be ascertained what had become of my brother. This plan was executed as it had been resolved. I went to Geneva; my father met me there, for long since he had occasionally visited Geneva without being molested, though the decree that had been pronounced against him had never been reversed; but, being esteemed for his courage, and respected for his probity, they pretended to have forgotten the affair; and the magistrates, employed with the great project that came to light some little time after, were not willing to alarm the citizens by recalling to their memory, at an improper time, this instance of their former partiality.

I apprehended that I should meet with difficulties on account of having changed my religion, but none occurred, the laws of Geneva being less harsh in that particular than those of Berne, where whoever changes his religion loses not only his citizenship but his property. My rights, however, were not disputed, but I found my patrimony, I know not how, reduced to very little; and, though it was known almost to a certainty that my brother was dead, yet, as there was no legal proof, I could not lay claim to his share, which I left without regret to my father, who enjoyed it as long as he lived. No sooner were the necessary formalities adjusted, and I had received my money, some of which I expended in books, than I flew to lay the remainder at Mamma's feet. My heart beat with joy during the journey, and the moment in which I gave the money into her hands was to me a thousand times more delightful than that which gave it into mine. She received this with the simplicity common to great souls, who, doing similar actions without effort, see them without surprise. Indeed, with equal

simplicity, this sum was almost all expended for my use, and it would have been employed in the same manner had it come from any other quarter.

Meanwhile, my health was not yet re-established; on the contrary, I decayed visibly, was pale as death, and reduced to an absolute skeleton. The beating of my arteries was extreme, my palpitations very frequent. I was sensible of a continual oppression, and my weakness became at length so great that I could scarcely move without pain or step quickly without danger of suffocation, stoop without vertigoes, or lift even the smallest weight, which reduced me to the most tormenting inaction for a man so naturally active as myself. It is certain that my disorder was in a great measure hypochondriacal. The vapours is a malady common to people in fortunate situations: the tears I frequently shed without reason; the lively alarms I felt on the falling of a leaf, or the fluttering of a bird; inequality of humour in the calm of a most pleasing life — all marked that weariness of well-being which, so to speak, carries sensibility to extravagance. We are so little formed for felicity that when the soul and body do not suffer together, they must necessarily endure separate inconveniences, the good state of the one being almost always injurious to the happiness of the other. Had all the pleasures of life courted me, my weakened frame would not have permitted the enjoyment of them, without my being able to particularise the real seat of my complaint; yet in the decline of life, after having encountered very serious and real evils, my body seemed to regain its strength, as if on purpose to encounter additional misfortunes; and, at the moment I write this, though infirm, near sixty, and overwhelmed with every kind of sorrow, I feel more ability to suffer than I ever possessed for enjoyment, when in the very flower of my age and in the bosom of real happiness.

To complete me, I had mingled a little physiology among my other readings. I set about studying anatomy, and considering the multitude, movement, and wonderful construction of the various parts that composed my frame. My apprehensions were instantly increased; I expected to feel the machinery deranged twenty times a day, and, far from being surprised to find myself dying, was astonished that I yet existed! I could not read the description of any malady without thinking it mine, and, had I not been already indisposed, I am certain I should have become so from this study. Finding in every disease symptoms similar to mine, I fancied I had them all, and at length gained one more troublesome than any I yet suffered, which I had thought myself delivered from: this was a violent inclination to seek a cure, which it is very difficult to suppress when once a person begins reading medical books. By searching, reflecting, and comparing, I became persuaded that the foundation of my complaint was a polypus at the heart, and Salomon appeared to coincide with the idea. Reasonably, this opinion should have confirmed my former resolution. This, however, was not the case; on the contrary, I exerted every power of my understanding in search of a remedy for a polypus at the heart, resolving to undertake this marvellous cure. In a journey which Anet had made to Montpellier, to see the botanic garden there, and visit Monsieur Sauvages, the demonstrator, he had been informed that Monsieur Fizes had cured a similar polypus. Mamma, recollecting this circumstance, mentioned it to me, and nothing more was necessary to inspire me with a desire to consult Monsieur Fizes. The hope of recovery gave me courage and strength to undertake the journey. The money from Geneva furnished the means. Mamma, far from dissuading, entreated me to go. Behold me, therefore, set out for Montpellier!

But it was not necessary to go so far to obtain the cure I needed. Finding the motion of a horse too fatiguing, I had hired a chaise at Grenoble, and on entering Moirans five or six other chaises arrived in rank after mine. For the moment it was indeed the adventure of the *brancards*.[1] The greater part of these were in the train of a newly married lady called Madame du Colombier; with her was a Madame de Larnage, not so young or handsome as the former, yet not less amiable, and who from Romans, where the bride was to alight, was to pursue her route to Saint-Andiol, near the Pont-Saint-Esprit. With my known timidity it will not be conjectured that I was very ready at forming an acquaintance with these fine ladies and the company that attended them; but travelling the same road, lodging at the same inns, and being obliged to eat at the same table, if I would not be thought an unsociable monster, the acquaintance was unavoidable. It was formed then, and even sooner than I desired, for all this bustle was by no means convenient to a person in ill-health, particularly to one of my humour. Curiosity renders these artful creatures extremely insinuating; they accomplish their design of becoming acquainted with a man by endeavouring to turn his brain, and this was precisely what happened to me. Madame du Colombier was too much surrounded by her young fops to have any opportunity of paying much attention to me; besides, it was not worth while, as we were to separate in so short a time; but Madame de Larnage, less besieged than her young friend, had to provide herself for the remainder of the journey. Behold me, then, attacked by Madame de Larnage, and adieu to poor Jean-Jacques, or rather farewell to fever, vapours, and polypus — all vanished in her presence, save some few palpitations of which she would not cure me. The ill state of my health

[1] See p. 171.

was the first subject of our conversation; they saw I was indisposed, knew I was going to Montpellier, but my air and manner certainly did not exhibit the appearance of a libertine, since it was clear by what followed that they did not suspect I was going there for a reason that carries many that road. Though a poor state of health does not form a good recommendation for a man in the eyes of ladies, it nevertheless rendered me interesting to these. In the morning they sent to inquire how I was and invite me to take chocolate with them, and when I made my appearance, asked how I had passed the night. Once, according to my praiseworthy custom of speaking without thought, I replied, 'I did not know,' which answer made them conclude I was a fool; but, on questioning me further, the examination turned out so far to my advantage, that I rather rose in their opinion, and I once heard Madame du Colombier say to her friend, 'He is not sufficiently acquainted with the world, but he is amiable.' These words were a great encouragement, and assisted me in rendering myself so.

As we became more familiar, it was natural to give each other some little account of whence we came, and who we were. This embarrassed me greatly, for I was sensible that in good company and among women of spirit the very name of a new convert would utterly undo me. I know not by what whimsicality I resolved to pass for an Englishman; however, in consequence of that determination I gave myself out for a Jacobite, and was readily believed. I called myself Dudding, and they called me Monsieur Dudding. A cursed Marquis de Torignan, who was one of the company, an invalid like myself, old and ill-tempered to boot, took it into his head to begin a long conversation with Monsieur Dudding. He spoke of King James, of the Pretender, and the Court of St. Germain. I sat on thorns the whole time, for I was totally

unacquainted with all these, except what little I had picked up in the writings of Comte Hamilton, and from the gazettes; however, I made such fortunate use of the little I did know as to extricate myself from this dilemma, happy in not being questioned on the English language, of which I did not know a single word.

The company were all very agreeable, we looked forward to the moment of separation with regret, and therefore made snails' journeys. We arrived one Sunday at Saint-Marcellin. Madame de Larnage would go to mass; I accompanied her, and had nearly ruined all my affairs, for I acted my part as usual, and by my modest, reserved countenance during the service she concluded me a bigot, and conceived a very ill opinion of me, as I learned from her own account two days after. It required a great deal of gallantry subsequently to efface this ill impression, or rather Madame de Larnage, who was not easily disheartened, determined to risk the first advances, and see how I should behave. She made several, and, far from being vain of my figure, I thought she was making sport of me; full of this ridiculous idea, there was no folly of which I was not guilty. It was worse than the Marquis in *Le Legs*. Madame de Larnage persisted in making so many inciting and tender remarks that a much wiser man than myself could hardly have taken them seriously. The more obvious her advances were, the more I was confirmed in my belief, and, what increased my torment, I found I was really in love with her. I frequently said to myself, and sometimes to her, sighing, 'Ah! why is not all this real? — then should I be the most fortunate of men.' I am inclined to think my stupidity did but whet her fancy; she would not be defeated.

We left Madame du Colombier and her following at Romans; after which, Madame de Larnage, the Marquis de Torignan, and myself continued our route slowly, and

in the most agreeable manner. The Marquis, though indisposed and rather ill-humoured, was pretty good company, but was not well pleased in eating bread while meat was roasting; for Madame de Larnage took so little care to conceal her inclinations, that he perceived it sooner than I did, and his sarcasms must have given me that confidence I could not presume to take from the kindness of the lady, if by a surmise, which no one but myself could have blundered on, I had not imagined they perfectly understood each other, and were agreed to turn my passion into ridicule. This foolish idea completed my stupidity, making me act the most ridiculous part, while, had I listened to the feelings of my heart, I might have been performing one far more brilliant. I am astonished that Madame de Larnage was not disgusted at my folly, and did not discard me with disdain; but she had sufficient knowledge of the world to perceive that there was more bashfulness than indifference in my composition.

She succeeded at length in making me understand, though not without trouble. We arrived at Valence to dinner, and according to our usual custom passed the remainder of the day there. We lodged out of the city, at the Saint-Jacques; I shall never forget this inn, nor the chamber therein which Madame de Larnage occupied. After dinner, Madame de Larnage proposed a walk. She knew the Marquis was no walker, consequently this was an excellent plan for a *tête-à-tête*, which she was predetermined to make the most of, for time and opportunity grew precious. While we were walking round the city by the side of the moats, I entered on a long history of my complaint, to which she answered in so tender an accent, frequently pressing my arm, which she held to her heart, that it required all my stupidity not to be convinced of the sincerity of her attachment; and yet, strange as it may seem, I too was deeply moved. I have

already observed that she was amiable; love rendered her charming, giving back to her all the loveliness of youth; and she managed her advances with so much art, that they were sufficient to have seduced the most insensible. I was therefore in very uneasy circumstances, and frequently on the point of making a declaration; but the dread of offending her, and the still greater fear of being laughed at, ridiculed, made table-talk, and complimented on my enterprise by the satirical Marquis had such unconquerable power over me that, though ashamed of my ridiculous bashfulness, I could not take courage to surmount it. I was on the rack; I had already exhausted my pretty conventional phrases, of which I felt the absurdity at such a time; and, not knowing how to look, or what to say, continued silent, giving the finest opportunity in the world for that ridicule I so much dreaded. Happily, Madame de Larnage took a kinder resolution, and suddenly interrupted this silence by throwing her arm around my neck, while at the same instant her lips spoke too plainly to mine to be any longer misunderstood. The crisis could not have come at a happier moment; I became responsive. She had given me that confidence, the want of which has almost always prevented me from appearing myself. I was myself now: never did my eyes, my senses, my heart, my lips express themselves so frankly and fully. Never did I make better reparation for my mistakes; and, if this little conquest had cost Madame de Larnage some difficulties, I have reason to believe she did not regret them.

Were I to live a hundred years, I should ever remember with pleasure this charming woman. I say charming, for, though neither young nor beautiful, she was neither old nor ugly, having nothing in her appearance that could prevent her wit and accomplishments from producing all their effects. Unlike the generality of women,

her face was the least youthful-looking of her personal qualities, and I fear the use of rouge had spoiled it. She had her reasons for being a little free; it was thus that she made a lover understand her merit. It was possible to see her without falling in love, but the man to whom she resigned herself could not fail to adore her; which proves, in my opinion, that she was not generally so prodigal of her favours. It is true, her inclination for me was so sudden and lively that it scarce appears excusable; though, in the short but charming interval I passed with her, I had reason to believe, from the restraint she sometimes insisted on, that, notwithstanding her amorous temperament, she studied my health even more than her own pleasures.

Our good intelligence did not escape the penetration of the Marquis — not that he discontinued his usual raillery; on the contrary, he treated me as a sighing, hopeless swain, languishing under the rigours of his mistress. Not a word, smile, or look escaped him by which I could imagine he suspected my happiness; and I should have thought him completely deceived, had not Madame de Larnage, who was more clear-sighted than myself, told me that he was aware of the matter, but was a well-bred man; and, indeed, it was impossible to behave with more attention or greater civility than he constantly paid me, notwithstanding his satirical sallies, especially after my success, which, as he was unacquainted with my stupidity, he perhaps gave me the honour of achieving. It has already been seen that he was mistaken in this particular; but no matter, I profited by his error, for, being conscious that the laugh was on my side, I took all his sallies in good part, and sometimes parried them with tolerable success; for, proud to display before her that wit which Madame de Larnage had bestowed upon me, I no longer appeared the same man.

We were in a country and in a season of plenty, and had everywhere excellent cheer, thanks to the kind attention of the Marquis; though I would willingly have relinquished this advantage to have been better satisfied with the situation of our chambers; but he always sent his footman in advance to provide them; and, whether of his own accord, or by the order of his master, the rogue always took care that the Marquis's chamber should be close by Madame de Larnage's, while mine was at the farther end of the house; but that made no great difference, or perhaps it rendered our rendezvous the more charming. This happiness lasted four or five days, during which time I was intoxicated with delight, which I tasted pure and serene without any alloy, an advantage I could never boast before; and, I may add, it is owing to Madame de Larnage that I did not go out of the world without having tasted real pleasure.

If the sentiment I felt for her was not precisely love, it was at least a very tender return of that she testified for me; it was a sensuousness so glowing in the enjoyment, an intimacy so sweet in our conversations, that it possessed all the delights of love, without that kind of delirium which affects the brain, and tends to diminish happiness. I never experienced true love but once in my life, and that was not with her, neither did I feel that affection for her which I had felt, and yet continued to feel, for Madame de Warens; but, for this very reason, I possessed her a hundred times more completely. When with Madame de Warens, my felicity was always disturbed by a secret sadness, a compunction of heart, which I found it difficult to surmount. Instead of being delighted at the acquisition of so much happiness, I could not help reproaching myself for contributing to render her I loved unworthy. On the contrary, with Madame de Larnage, proud of my virility and felicity, I gave way

joyfully and confidently to my desires, while my triumph redoubled every other charm.

I do not recollect exactly where we quitted the Marquis, who resided in this country, but I know we were alone on our arrival at Montélimar, where Madame de Larnage made her chambermaid get into my chaise, and accommodated me with a seat in hers. It will easily be believed that travelling in this manner was by no means displeasing to us, and that I should be very much puzzled to give any account of the country we passed through. She had some business at Montélimar, which detained her there two or three days; during this time she quitted me but one quarter of an hour, for a visit she could not avoid, which embarrassed her with a number of invitations she had no inclination to accept, and therefore excused herself by pleading some indisposition; though she took care this should not prevent our walking together every day, in the most charming country, and under the finest sky imaginable. Oh, those three days! What reason have I to regret them! Never did such happiness return again.

The amours of a journey cannot be very durable. It was necessary we should part, and I must confess it was almost time; not that I was satiated by my happiness, for my attachment increased daily, but, in spite of the lady's discretion, little more remained to me but goodwill. We endeavoured to comfort each other for the pain of parting by forming plans for our reunion; and it was concluded that — the recent regimen having been so beneficial to me — after staying five or six weeks at Montpellier, which would give Madame de Larnage time to prepare for my reception in such a manner as to prevent scandal, I should return to Saint-Andiol, and spend the winter under her direction. She gave me ample instruction on what it was necessary I should know,

on what it would be proper to say, and how I should conduct myself. Meanwhile we were to correspond by letter. She spoke much and earnestly on the care of my health, conjured me to consult some skilful physicians, and be attentive in following their prescriptions, she herself promising to make me do so when with her, however rigid they might be. I believe her concern was sincere, for she loved me, and gave proofs of her affection less equivocal than the prodigality of her favours: judging by my mode of travelling that I was not in very affluent circumstances, on our parting, though not rich herself, she would have had me share the contents of her purse, which she had brought pretty well furnished from Grenoble, and it was with great difficulty I could make her put up with a denial. In a word, we parted, my heart full of her idea, and leaving in hers, if I am not mistaken, a firm attachment to me.

While pursuing the remainder of my journey, remembrance ran over everything that had passed from the commencement of it, and I was well satisfied at finding myself alone in a comfortable chaise, where I could ruminate at ease on the pleasures I had enjoyed, and those which awaited my return. I only thought of Saint-Andiol and of the delightful life I was to lead there. I saw nothing but Madame de Larnage or what related to her; the whole universe besides was nothing to me — even Mamma was forgotten! I set about combining all the details by which Madame de Larnage had endeavoured to give me in advance an idea of her house, of the neighbourhood, of her connections and manner of life. She had a daughter, whom she had often described in the warmest terms of maternal affection. This daughter was fifteen, lively, charming, and of an amiable disposition. Madame de Larnage promised me her friendship; I had not forgotten that promise, and was curious to know how Mademoi-

selle de Larnage would treat her mother's dear friend. These were the subjects of my reveries from Pont-Saint-Esprit to Remoulin. I had been advised to visit the Pont du Gard, and did not fail to do so. After a breakfast at which I ate some excellent figs, I hired a guide, and set out. Hitherto I had seen none of the remaining monuments of Roman magnificence, and I expected to find this worthy of the hands by which it was constructed; for once, the reality surpassed my expectation. This was the only time in my life it ever did so, and Romans alone could have produced that effect. The view of this noble and sublime work struck me the more forcibly from being in the midst of a desert, where silence and solitude render the object more striking, and admiration more lively, for, though called a bridge, it is nothing more than an aqueduct. One cannot help exclaiming, What strength could have transported these enormous stones so far from any quarry? And what motive could have united the labours of so many millions of men, in a place that no one inhabited? I passed over the three stages of this superb edifice with a veneration which made me reluctant to trample on its stones. In the echo of my footsteps under these immense arches I seemed to hear the mighty voices of their builders. I felt myself a mere insect, lost in this vastness, and yet, with all this sense of littleness, experienced an elevation of the soul, and murmured with a sigh, 'Why was I not born a Roman?' I remained whole hours in the most ravishing contemplation, and returned pensive and thoughtful to my inn. This reverie was by no means favourable to Madame de Larnage; she had taken care to forewarn me against the girls of Montpellier, but not against the Pont du Gard. It is impossible to anticipate every contingency.

On my arrival at Nîmes, I went to see the Amphitheatre, which is a far more magnificent work than the

Pont du Gard, yet it made a much less impression on me, perhaps because my admiration had been already exhausted on the former object, or that the situation of the latter, in the midst of a city, was less proper to excite it. This vast and superb circus is surrounded by small dirty houses, while others yet smaller and dirtier fill up the arena in such a manner that the whole produces an unequal and confused effect, in which regret and indignation stifle pleasure and surprise. I have since seen the Amphitheatre at Verona, which is a vast deal smaller and less beautiful than that at Nîmes, but preserved with all possible care and neatness, by which means alone it made a much stronger and more agreeable impression on me. The French pay no regard to these things, respect no monument of antiquity; ever eager to undertake, they never finish or conserve.

I was so much better, and had gained such an appetite by exercise, that I stopped a whole day at the Pont de Lunel, for the sake of good entertainment and company, this being deservedly esteemed at that time the best inn in Europe, for those who kept it, knowing how to make its fortunate situation turn to advantage, took care to provide both abundance and variety. It was really curious to find in a lonely country-house a table every day furnished with sea and fresh-water fish, excellent game, and choice wines, served up with all the attention and care which are only to be expected among the great or opulent, and all this for thirty-five sous each person. But the Pont de Lunel did not long remain on this footing, for the proprietor, presuming too much on its reputation, at length lost it entirely.

During this journey I really forgot my complaints, but recollected them again on my arrival at Montpellier. My vapours were absolutely gone, but every other complaint remained, and though custom had rendered them

less troublesome, they were still sufficient to make any one who had been suddenly seized with them suppose himself attacked by some mortal disease. In effect, they were rather alarming than painful, and made the mind suffer more than the body, though it apparently threatened the latter with destruction. While my attention was called off by the vivacity of my passions, I paid no attention to my health; but, as my complaints were not altogether imaginary, I thought of them seriously when the tumult had subsided. Recollecting the salutary advice of Madame de Larnage, and the cause of my journey, I consulted the most famous practitioners, particularly Monsieur Fizes, and, through an excess of precaution, boarded at the house of a doctor — an Irishman named Fitz-Morris. This person boarded a number of young gentlemen who were studying physic, and, what rendered his house very commodious for an invalid, Monsieur Fitz-Morris contented himself with a moderate pension for provision and lodging, and took nothing of his boarders for attendance as a physician. He undertook to execute the orders of Monsieur Fizes, and endeavour to re-establish my health. He certainly acquitted himself very well in this employment; as to regimen, indigestions were not to be gained at his table; and though I am not much hurt at privations of that kind, the objects of comparison were so near, that I could not help thinking with myself sometimes that Monsieur de Torignan was a much better purveyor than Monsieur Fitz-Morris; notwithstanding, as there was no danger of dying with hunger, and all the youths were gay and good-humoured, I believe this manner of living was really serviceable, and prevented my falling into those languors to which I had been subject. I passed the morning in taking medicines, particularly some kind of waters (I believe they were those of Vals), and in writing to Madame de Larnage;

for the correspondence was regularly kept up, and Rousseau undertook to receive letters for his friend Dudding. At noon I took a walk to La Canourgue, with some of our young boarders, who were all very good lads; after this we assembled for dinner; when this was over, an affair of importance employed most of us till night — this was going a little way out of town to take our afternoon's collation, and make up two or three parties at mall. As I had neither strength nor skill, I did not play myself, but I betted on the games, and, interested for the success of my wager, followed the players and their balls over rough and stony roads, procuring by this means both an agreeable and salutary exercise. We took our afternoon's refreshment at an inn outside the city. I need not observe that these meetings were extremely merry, but must not omit that they were equally innocent, though the girls of the house were very pretty. Monsieur Fitz-Morris, who was a great mall-player himself, was our president, and I can declare, notwithstanding the ill reputation generally bestowed on students, that I found more virtuous dispositions among these youths than could easily be found among an equal number of men; they were rather noisy than fond of wine, and more merry than licentious. I accustomed myself so much to this mode of life, and it accorded so much with my humour, that I should have been very well content with a continuance of it. Several of my fellow-boarders were Irish, from whom I endeavoured to learn some English words, as a precaution for my visit to Saint-Andiol. The time now drew near for my departure thither; every letter Madame de Larnage wrote, she entreated me not to delay it, and I prepared to obey her. I was convinced that the physicians, who understood nothing of my disorder, looked on my complaint as imaginary, and treated me accordingly with their *squine*, their waters and whey.

In this respect physicians and philosophers differ widely from theologians, admitting the truth only of what they can explain, and making their knowledge the measure of possibilities. These gentlemen understood nothing of my illness, which did not absolutely invalidate me, and who would presume to doubt the profound skill of a physician? I plainly saw that they only meant to keep me amused, and make me swallow my money; and, judging their substitute at Saint-Andiol would do me quite as much service, and more agreeably, I resolved to give her the preference; full, therefore, of this wise resolution, I quitted Montpellier.

I set off towards the end of November, after a stay of six weeks or two months in that city, where I left a dozen louis, without either my health or understanding being the better for it, if I except a short course of anatomy begun under Monsieur Fitz-Morris, which I was soon obliged to abandon owing to the horrible stench of the bodies he dissected, which I found it impossible to endure.

Not thoroughly satisfied in my own mind as to the rectitude of this expedition, as I advanced towards Pont-Saint-Esprit, which was equally the road to Saint-Andiol and to Chambéri, I began to reflect on Mamma, the remembrance of whose letters, though less frequent than those of Madame de Larnage, awakened in my heart a remorse that passion had stifled in the first part of my journey, but which became so lively on my return that, setting a just estimate on the love of pleasure, I found myself in such a situation of mind that I could listen wholly to the voice of reason. Besides, in acting the part of an adventurer, I might be less fortunate than I had been in the beginning; for it was only necessary that in all Saint-Andiol there should be one person who had been in England, or who knew the English, or anything of their language, to prove me an impostor. The family of

Madame de Larnage might not be pleased with me, and would, perhaps, treat me impolitely; her daughter, of whom I thought too frequently, made me uneasy. I trembled lest I should fall in love with this girl, and that very fear had already half done the business. Was I going, in return for the mother's bounties, to seek the ruin of the daughter, — to sow dissension, dishonour, scandal, and hell itself, in her family? The very idea struck me with horror, and I took a firm resolution to combat and vanquish this unhappy attachment, should I be so unfortunate as to experience it. But why expose myself to this combat? How wretched the condition of one living with a mother, of whom he grows weary, and enamoured of her daughter, to whom he dares not disclose his passion! Why rush upon misfortunes, affronts, and remorse, for the sake of pleasures whose greatest charm was already exhausted? For I was sensible that this attachment had lost its first vivacity. The relish for pleasure remained, but passion had fled. With these thoughts were mingled reflections relative to my situation and my duty to my good and generous Mamma, who, already loaded with debts, would become more so from the foolish expenses I was running into, and whom I was deceiving so unworthily. This reproach at length became so keen that it triumphed in the end; and, on approaching Saint-Esprit, I formed the resolution to refrain from stopping at Saint-Andiol, and continue my journey right forward to Chambéri. I executed this resolution courageously, with some sighs I confess, but with the heartfelt satisfaction, which I enjoyed for the first time in my life, of saying, 'I merit my own esteem, and know how to prefer duty to pleasure.' This was the first real obligation I owed my books, since these had taught me to reflect and compare. After the virtuous principles I had so lately adopted, after all the rules of wisdom and honour

I had proposed to myself, and felt so proud to follow, the shame of possessing so little stability, and contradicting so egregiously my own maxims, triumphed over the allurements of pleasure. Pride had, perhaps, as much share in my resolution as virtue; but if this pride is not virtue itself, its effects are so similar that we are pardonable in deceiving ourselves.

One advantage resulting from good actions is that they elevate the soul to a disposition of attempting still better; for, such is human weakness, that we must place among our good deeds an abstinence from those crimes that we are tempted to commit. No sooner was my resolution confirmed than I became another man, or rather I became what I was before I had erred, and what the intoxication of the moment had concealed. Full of worthy sentiments and wise resolutions, I continued my journey, intending to expiate my fault, to regulate my future conduct by the laws of virtue, to dedicate myself without reserve to that best of mothers, to whom I vowed as much fidelity in future as I felt real attachment, and to know no other love but the love of duty. The sincerity of this return to virtue appeared to promise a better destiny; but mine, alas! was fixed, and already begun; and while my heart, full of good and virtuous sentiments, was contemplating only innocence and happiness through life, I touched on the fatal period that was to draw after it the long chain of my misfortunes!

My impatience to end my journey had made me use more diligence than I intended. I had sent a letter from Valence, mentioning the day and hour I should arrive, but I had gained half a day on this calculation, which time I passed at Chaparillan, that I might arrive exactly at the time I mentioned. I wished to enjoy to its full extent the pleasure of seeing her, and preferred deferring this happiness a little, that expectancy might increase its

value. This precaution had always succeeded; heretofore my arrival had caused a little holiday; I expected no less this time; and these preparations, so dear to me, would have been well worth the trouble of contriving them.

I came then exactly at the hour, and while at a considerable distance, looked forward with an expectancy of seeing her on the road to meet me. The beating of my heart increased as I drew near the house. At length I arrived, quite out of breath, for I had left my chaise in the town. I see no one in the garden, at the door, or at the windows; I am seized with terror, fearful that some accident has happened. I enter, all is quiet; the labourers are eating their luncheon in the kitchen, and far from observing any preparation, the servant seems surprised to see me, not knowing I was expected. I go upstairs. At length I see her — that dear Mamma, so tenderly, truly, and entirely beloved. I run towards her, and throw myself at her feet. 'Ah, child!' said she, 'art thou returned then?' embracing me at the same time; 'have you had a good journey? How do you do?' This reception disconcerted me for some moments. I then asked whether she had received my letter. She answered, 'Yes.' 'I should have thought not,' replied I; and the matter concluded there. A young man was with her at this time. I recollected having seen him in the house before my departure, but at present he seemed established there; in short, he was so; I found my place already supplied!

This young man came from the country of Vaud; his father, named Vintzenried, was Keeper — or, as he expressed himself, Captain — of the Castle of Chillon. This son of this Captain was a journeyman peruke-maker, and gained his living in that capacity when he first presented himself to Madame de Warens, who received him kindly, as she did all comers, particularly those from her

own country. He was a tall, fair, silly-looking youth; well enough made, with an unmeaning face, and a mind of the same description, speaking always like the beau in a comedy, and mingling the manners and customs of his former situation with a long history of his successes with ladies; naming, according to his account, not above half the Marchionesses who had favoured him, and pretending never to have dressed the head of a pretty woman without having likewise decorated her husband's; vain, foolish, ignorant, and insolent; such was the substitute taken in my absence, and the companion offered me on my return.

Oh! if souls disengaged from their terrestrial bonds yet view from the bosom of eternal light what passes here below, pardon, dear and honoured shade, that I show no more favour to your failings than my own, but equally unveil both to my readers' eyes. I ought, and will, be as just to you as to myself; how much less will you lose by this resolution than I shall! How much do your amiable and gentle disposition, your inexhaustible goodness of heart, your frankness, and other admirable virtues compensate for your weakness, if errors of reason alone can be called such! You had errors, but not vices; your conduct was reprehensible, but your heart was ever pure.

The new-comer had shown himself zealous and exact in all her little commissions, which were very numerous, and he diligently overlooked the labourers. As noisy and insolent as I was quiet and forbearing, he was seen, or rather heard, at the plough, in the hay-loft, wood-house, stable, farm-yard, at the same instant. He neglected the gardening, this labour being too peaceful and moderate; his chief pleasure was to load or drive the cart, to saw or cleave wood; he was never seen without a hatchet or pick-axe in his hand, running, knocking, and hallooing with all his might. I know not how many men's labour

he performed, but he certainly made noise enough for ten or a dozen at least. All this bustle impressed poor Mamma; she thought this young man a treasure, and, willing to attach him to herself, employed the means she imagined necessary for that purpose, not forgetting what she most depended on, the surrender of her person.

My readers should be able to form some judgment of my heart; its sentiments were the most constant and sincere, particularly those which had brought me back to Chambéri. What a sudden and complete overthrow was this to my whole being! To judge fully of this, the reader must place himself in my situation. I saw all the future felicity I had promised myself vanish in a moment; all the charming ideas I had indulged so affectionately disappear entirely; and I, who even from childhood had not been able to consider my existence for a moment as separate from hers, for the first time saw myself utterly alone. This moment was dreadful, and those that succeeded it were always gloomy. I was yet young, but the pleasing sentiments of enjoyment and hope which enliven youth were extinguished. From that hour my existence seemed half annihilated. I contemplated in advance the melancholy remains of an insipid life, and if at any time an image of happiness glanced through my mind, it was not that which appeared natural to me, and I felt that, even should I obtain it, I could never be truly happy.

I was so dull of apprehension, and my confidence in her was so great, that, notwithstanding the familiar tone of the new-comer, which I looked on as an effect of Mamma's easy disposition, which rendered her free with every one, I never should have suspected his real situation had not she herself informed me of it; but she hastened to make this avowal with a freedom calculated to inflame me with resentment, could my heart have turned to that point.

Speaking of this connection as quite immaterial with respect to herself, she reproached me with negligence in household affairs, and mentioned my frequent absence, as though she had been of such a temperament that she was obliged soon to supply my place. 'Ah, Mamma!' said I, my heart bursting with the most poignant grief, 'what do you dare to tell me? Is this the reward of an attachment like mine? Have you so many times preserved my life, for the sole purpose of taking from me all that could render it desirable? Your infidelity will bring me to the grave, but you will regret my loss!' She answered, with a tranquillity sufficient to distract me, that I talked like a child; that people did not die from such light causes; that I had lost nothing; that our friendship need be no less sincere, nor we any less intimate in every sense, for that her tender attachment to me could neither diminish nor end but with herself. In a word, she gave me to understand that my former rights held good, and that in sharing them with another I suffered no deprivation.

Never did the purity, truth, and force of my attachment to her appear more evident: never did I feel the sincerity and honesty of my soul more forcibly than at that moment. 'No, Mamma,' replied I, with the most violent agitation, 'I love you too much to disgrace you thus far, and too truly to share you; the regret that accompanied the first acquisition of your favours has continued to increase with my affection; I cannot preserve them on such terms. You shall ever have my adoration; be worthy of it; I had rather honour you than be your lover. It is to you, O my dearest friend! that I resign my rights; it is to the union of our hearts that I sacrifice my pleasure; rather would I perish a thousand times than taste enjoyment which might degrade her I love.'

I preserved this resolution with a constancy worthy, I may say, of the sentiment that gave it birth. From this

moment I saw this beloved Mamma but with the eyes of a real son. It should be remarked here that this resolve did not meet her private approbation, as I too well perceived; yet she never employed the least art to make me renounce it, either by insinuating proposals, caresses, or any of those means which women so well know how to employ without exposing themselves to censure, and which seldom fail to succeed. Reduced to seek a fate independent of hers, and not able to devise one, I passed to the other extreme, placing my happiness so absolutely in her that I became almost regardless of myself. The ardent desire to see her happy, at any cost, absorbed all my affections; it was in vain she endeavoured to separate her felicity from mine; I felt I had a part in it, in spite of every impediment.

Thus, those virtues, whose seeds in my heart began to spring up with my misfortunes, which had been cultivated by study, only awaited the fermentation of adversity to become prolific. The first fruit of this disinterested disposition was to put from my heart every sentiment of hatred and envy against him who had supplanted me. I even sincerely wished to attach myself to this young man; to form and educate him; to make him sensible of his happiness, and, if possible, render him worthy of it: in a word, to do for him what Anet had formerly done for me. But the similarity of dispositions was wanting. More insinuating and enlightened than Anet, I possessed neither his coolness, fortitude, nor commanding strength of character, which I must have had in order to succeed. Neither did the young man possess those qualities which Anet found in me; such as docility, gratitude, and above all, the knowledge of a want of his instructions, and an ardent desire to render them useful. All these were wanting; the person I wished to improve saw in me nothing but an importunate, chattering pedant; while, on

the contrary, he admired his own importance in the house, measuring the services he thought he rendered by the noise he made, and looking on his hatchets and pick-axes as infinitely more useful than all my old books; and perhaps in this particular he might not be altogether blamable, but he gave himself a number of airs sufficient to make any one die with laughter. With the peasants he assumed the airs of a country gentleman; presently he did as much with me, and at length with Mamma herself. His name, Vintzenried, did not appear noble enough; he therefore changed it to that of Monsieur de Courtilles, and by the latter appellation he was thenceforth known at Chambéri, and in Maurienne, where he married.

At length this illustrious person gave himself such airs of consequence that he was everything in the house, and myself nothing. When I had the misfortune to displease him, he scolded Mamma, and a fear of exposing her to his brutality rendered me subservient to all his whims, so that every time he cleaved wood — an office which he performed with singular pride — it was necessary I should be an idle spectator and admirer of his prowess. This lad was not, however, of a bad disposition. He loved Mamma because, indeed, it was impossible to do otherwise; nor had he any aversion even to me, and when he happened to be out of his airs would listen to our admonitions, and frankly own he was a fool; yet, notwithstanding these acknowledgements, his follies were as numerous as before. His knowledge was so contracted, and his inclinations so mean, that it was useless to reason, and almost impossible to be pleased with him. Not content with a most charming woman, he fancied an old red-haired, toothless waiting-maid, whose unwelcome service Mamma had the patience to endure, though it was absolutely disgusting. I soon perceived this new intrigue, and was

exasperated at it; but I saw something else, which affected me yet more, and made a deeper impression on me than anything had hitherto done. This was a visible coldness in Mamma's behaviour towards me.

The privation I had imposed on myself, and which she affected to approve, is one of those affronts which women scarcely ever forgive. Take the most sensible, the most philosophic female, one the least attached to pleasures of the senses, and slighting her favours, if within your reach, will be found the most unpardonable crime, even though she may care nothing for the man. This rule is certainly without exception, since a sympathy so natural and ardent was impaired in her by an abstinence founded only on virtue, attachment, and esteem. I no longer found with her that union of hearts which constituted all the happiness of mine. She seldom spoke to me with frankness but when she had occasion to complain of this new-comer, for, when they were agreed, I enjoyed but little of her confidence, and at length was scarcely ever consulted in her affairs. She seemed pleased, indeed, with my company, but had I passed whole days without seeing her she would hardly have missed me.

Insensibly, I found myself desolate and alone in that house where I had formerly been the very soul — where, if I may so express myself, I had enjoyed a double life — and, by degrees, I accustomed myself to disregard everything that passed, and even those who dwelt there. To avoid continual mortifications, I shut myself up with my books, or else wept and sighed unnoticed in the woods. This life soon became insupportable. I felt that the presence of a woman so dear to me, while estranged from her heart, increased my unhappiness, and was persuaded that, ceasing to see her, I should feel myself less cruelly separated. I resolved, therefore, to quit the house, mentioned it to her, and she, far from opposing my reso-

lution, approved it. She had an acquaintance at Grenoble called Madame Deybens, whose husband was on terms of friendship with Monsieur de Mably, chief provost of Lyons. Monsieur Deybens proposed my educating Monsieur de Mably's children. I accepted this offer, and departed for Lyons, without causing, and almost without feeling, the least regret at a separation the bare idea of which, a few months before, would have given us both the most excruciating torments.

I had almost as much knowledge as was necessary for a tutor, and flattered myself that my method would be unexceptionable; but the year I passed at Monsieur de Mably's was sufficient to undeceive me in that particular. The natural gentleness of my disposition seemed calculated for the employment, if a hasty temper had not been mingled with it. While things went favourably, and I saw the pains, which I did not spare, succeed, I was an angel; but a devil when they went contrary. If my pupils did not understand me, I was thrown off my balance, and when they showed any symptoms of an untoward disposition, I was so provoked that I could have killed them: which behaviour was not likely to render them either good or wise. I had two under my care, and they were of very different tempers. Ste.-Marie, who was between eight and nine years old, had a good person and quick apprehension, was giddy, lively, playful, and mischievous; but his mischief was ever good-humoured. The younger one, named Condillac, appeared stupid and fidgety, was headstrong as a mule, and seemed incapable of instruction. It may be supposed that between both I did not want employment, yet with patience and temper I might have succeeded; but wanting both, I did nothing worth mentioning, and my pupils profited very little. Assiduity was not lacking, but needed evenness of temper, and above all prudence. I could only make use of three

means, which are very weak, and often pernicious with children — namely, sentiment, reasoning, passion. I sometimes spoke so earnestly and tenderly to Ste.-Marie that I could not refrain from tears, and wished to excite similar sensations in him, as if it were reasonable to suppose a child could be susceptible of such emotions. Sometimes I exhausted myself in reasoning, as if persuaded he could comprehend me; and as he frequently hit upon very subtle arguments, concluded he must be reasonable, because he bade fair to be so good a logician. The little Condillac was still more embarrassing, for he neither understood, nor answered, nor was concerned at anything; he was of an obstinacy beyond belief, and was never happier than when he had succeeded in putting me in a rage; then, indeed, he was the philosopher, and I the child. I was conscious of all my faults, studied the tempers of my pupils, and do not think they ever suceeded in duping me; but where was the use of seeing the evil without being able to apply a remedy? My penetration was unavailing, since it never prevented any mischief, and everything I undertook failed, because all I did to effect my designs was precisely what I ought not to have done.

I was not more fortunate in what only had reference to myself than in what concerned my pupils. Madame Deybens, in recommending me to her friend Madame de Mably, had requested her to form my manners, and endeavour to give me an air of the world. She took some pains on this account, wishing to teach me how to do the honours of the house; but I was so awkward, bashful, and stupid, that she found it necessary to stop there. This, however, did not prevent me from falling in love with her, according to my usual custom. I even behaved in such a manner that she could not avoid observing it; but I never durst declare my passion, and, as the lady never seemed in a humour to make advances, I soon be-

came weary of my sighs and ogling, being convinced they answered no manner of purpose.

I had quite lost my inclination for petty thefts while with Mamma; indeed, as everything belonged to me, there was nothing to steal; besides, the elevated notions I had imbibed ought to have rendered me in future above such meanness, and generally speaking they certainly did so; but this proceeded less from my having learned to conquer temptations, than having succeeded in rooting out the propensity, and I should even now greatly dread stealing, as in my infancy, were I yet subject to the same inclinations. I had a proof of this at Monsieur de Mably's, where, though surrounded by a number of little things that I could easily have pilfered, and which appeared no temptation, I took it into my head to covet some white Arbois wine, a few glasses of which I had drunk at table, and thought delicious. It happened to be rather thick, and, as I fancied myself an excellent finer of wine, I mentioned my skill, and this was accordingly trusted to my care; but in attempting to mend I spoiled it, though to the sight only, for it remained equally agreeable to the taste. Profiting by this opportunity, I furnished myself from time to time with a few bottles to drink in my own apartment; but, unluckily, I could never drink without eating — the difficulty lay, therefore, in procuring bread. It was impossible to make a reserve of this article, and to have it bought for me by the footman was discovering myself, and insulting the master of the house. I dared not purchase it myself: how could a fine gentleman, with a sword by his side, enter a baker's shop to buy a small loaf of bread? It was utterly impossible. At length I recollected the saying of a great princess, who, on being informed that the country people had no bread, replied, 'Then let them eat pastry.' Yet even this resource was attended with a difficulty. I

sometimes went out alone for this very purpose, running over the whole city, and passing thirty pastry-cooks' shops without daring to enter any one of them. In the first place, it was necessary there should be only one person in the shop, and that person's physiognomy must be so encouraging as to give me confidence to pass the threshold; but when once the dear little cake was procured, and I was shut up in my chamber with that and a bottle of wine, taken cautiously from the bottom of a cupboard, how much did I enjoy my little draughts, while reading a few pages of a novel — for when I have no company I always like to read while eating; it seems a substitute for society, and I despatch alternately a page and a morsel; 'tis, indeed, as if my book dined with me.

I was neither dissolute nor sottish, never in my whole life having been intoxicated with liquor. My little thefts were not very indiscreet, yet they were discovered — the bottles betrayed me, and, though no notice was taken of it, I had no longer the management of the cellar. In all this Monsieur de Mably conducted himself with prudence and politeness, being really a very deserving man, who, under a manner as harsh as his employment, concealed a real gentleness of disposition and uncommon goodness of heart. He was judicious, equitable, and — what would not be expected from an officer of the Maréchaussée — very humane. Sensible of his indulgence, I became greatly attached to him, which made my stay in his house longer than it would otherwise have been; but at length, disgusted with an employment which I was not calculated for, and a situation of great confinement, consequently disagreeable to me, after a year's trial, during which time I spared no pains to fulfil my engagement, I determined to quit my pupils, being convinced that I should never succeed in educating them properly. Mon-

sieur de Mably saw this as clearly as myself, though I am inclined to think he would never have dismissed me had I not spared him the trouble, which was an excess of condescension in this particular that I certainly cannot justify.

What rendered my situation yet more insupportable was the comparison I was continually drawing between the life I now led and that which I had quitted: the remembrance of my dear Charmettes, my garden, trees, fountain, and orchard, but, above all, the company of her for whom I was born, and who was truly the soul of these enjoyments. On calling to mind our pleasures and innocent life, I was seized with such oppressions and heaviness of heart as deprived me of the power of action. A hundred times I was tempted instantly to set off on foot to her, being persuaded that, could I once more see her, I should be content to die that moment. In fine, I could no longer resist the tender emotions which recalled me back to her, whatever it might cost me. I accused myself of not having been sufficiently patient, complaisant, and kind; concluding I might yet live happily with her on the terms of tender friendship, and by showing more for her than I had hitherto done. I formed the finest projects in the world, burned to execute them, left all, renounced everything, departed, fled, and arriving in all the transports of my early youth, found myself once more at her feet. Alas! I should have died there with joy had I found in her reception, in her embrace, or in her heart, one quarter of what I had formerly found there, and of which I yet felt the undiminished warmth.

Fearful illusion of transitory things! She received me with that excellence of heart which could only die with her; but I sought a past which could never be recalled, and had hardly been half an hour with her before I was once more convinced that my former happiness had van-

ished for ever, and that I was in the same melancholy situation which I had been obliged to fly from, yet without being able to accuse any person of my unhappiness, for Courtilles really was not to blame, appearing to see my return with more pleasure than dissatisfaction. But how could I bear to be a secondary person with her to whom I had been everything, and who could never cease being such to me? How could I live an alien in that house where I had been the child? The sight of every object that had been witness to my former happiness rendered the comparison yet more distressing. I should have suffered less in any other habitation, for this incessantly recalled pleasing remembrances that embittered the consciousness of my loss. Consumed with vain regrets, given up to the most gloomy melancholy, I resumed the custom of remaining alone, except at meals. Shut up with my books, I sought to give some useful diversion to my ideas, and feeling the imminent danger of want, which I had so long dreaded, I sought means to provide against it when Mamma should have no other resource. I had placed her household on such a footing that affairs could proceed without growing worse, but since my departure everything had become altered. He who now managed her affairs was a spendthrift, and wished to make a great appearance, such as keeping a good horse with elegant trappings, loving to appear gay in the eyes of the neighbours, and was perpetually undertaking something he did not understand. Her pension was taken up in advance, her rent was in arrears, debts of every kind continued to accumulate. I could plainly foresee that her pension would soon be seized, and perhaps suppressed. In short, I expected nothing but ruin and misfortune, and the moment appeared to approach so rapidly that I already felt all its horrors.

My little library was my only amusement, and the

habit of searching for remedies for the sufferings of my mind determined me to seek some against the evil of those distressing circumstances which I daily expected would fall upon us; so, returning to my old chimeras, behold me once more building castles in the air to relieve this dear friend from the cruel extremities into which I saw her ready to fall. I did not believe myself qualified to shine in the republic of letters, or to stand any chance of making a fortune by that means; a new idea, therefore, inspired me with that confidence which the mediocrity of my talents could not impart. In ceasing to teach music I had not abandoned it. On the contrary, I had studied the theory sufficiently to consider myself well informed on the subject. When reflecting on the trouble it had cost me to read music, and the great difficulty I yet experienced in singing at sight, I began to think the fault might as well arise from the manner of noting as from my own dulness, being sensible it was an art which most people find difficult to understand. By examining the formation of the signs, I was convinced they were frequently very ill devised. I had before thought of marking the gamut by figures, to prevent the trouble of having to draw lines, or of noting the plainest air, but had been stopped by the difficulty of the octaves, and by the distinction of measure and quantity. This idea returned again to my mind, and, on a careful revision of it, I found the difficulties were by no means insurmountable. I pursued it successfully, and was at length able to note any music whatever by figures, with the greatest exactitude and simplicity. From this moment I supposed my fortune made, and, in the ardour of sharing it with her to whom I owed everything, thought only of going to Paris, not doubting that, on presenting my project to the Academy, it would produce a revolution. I had brought some money from Lyons. I augmented this stock by the sale of my

books, and in the course of a fortnight my resolution was both formed and executed. In short, full of the magnificent ideas it had inspired, and which were common to me on every occasion, I departed from Savoy with my new system of music, as I had formerly done from Turin with my heron-fountain.

Such have been the errors and failings of my youth. I have related the history of them with a fidelity which my heart approves; if my riper years were dignified with some virtues, I should have related them with the same frankness; it was my intention to have done this, but I must stop here. Time may withdraw the veil; and, should my memory reach posterity, it may one day discover what I had to say. The reason of my silence will then be known.

PART TWO

BOOK VII

[1741]

AFTER two years' silence and patience, and notwithstanding my resolutions, I again take up my pen. Reader, suspend your judgment as to the reasons which force me to such a step: of these you cannot judge until you shall have read my book.

My peaceful youth has been seen to pass away calmly and agreeably, without any great disappointments or remarkable prosperity. This mediocrity was mostly owing to my ardent yet feeble nature, less prompt in undertaking than easy to discourage: quitting repose by starts, but returning to it from lassitude and inclination, and which, placing me in an idle and tranquil state, for which alone I felt I was born, at a distance from the paths of great virtues, and still farther from those of great vices, never permitted me to arrive at anything great, either good or bad.

What a different picture shall I soon have to display! Fate, which for thirty years favoured my inclinations, for thirty more has opposed them; and this continued opposition between my situation and disposition will appear to have been the source of enormous faults, unheard-of misfortunes, and of every virtue except that fortitude which alone can do honour to adversity.

The first part of this work was written from memory, and therefore I must have fallen into many errors. As I am obliged to write the second part from memory also, the errors in it will probably be still more numerous. The agreeable remembrance of my fairest years, passed with

so much tranquillity and innocence, has left in my heart a thousand charming impressions, which I love incessantly to call to my recollection. It will soon appear how different from these those of the rest of my life have been. To recall them to my mind is to renew their bitterness. Far from increasing that of my situation by these sorrowful reflections, I repel them as much as possible, and in this endeavour often succeed so well as to be unable to retrace them at will. This facility of forgetting my misfortunes is a consolation which Heaven has reserved to me in the midst of those which fate was one day to accumulated upon my hea. My memory, which presents to me no objects but such as are agreeable, is the happy counterpoise of my terrified imagination, by which I foresee nothing but a cruel futurity.

All the papers I had collected to aid my recollection, and guide me in this undertaking, having passed into other hands, can never more be in mine.

I have but one faithful guide on which I can depend: this is the chain of sentiments by which the succession of my existence has been marked, and by these the events which have been either efficient causes or effects. I easily forget my misfortunes, but I cannot forget my faults, and still less my virtuous sentiments. The remembrance of these is too dear to me ever to be effaced from my mind. I may omit facts, transpose events, and fall into some errors of dates; but I cannot be deceived in what I have felt, nor in that which from sentiment I have done; and to relate this is my chief aim. The real object of my confessions is to communicate an exact knowledge of what I essentially am and have been in every situation of my life. I have promised the history of my mind, and to write it faithfully I have no need of other aids: to enter into my own heart, as I have hitherto done, will alone be sufficient.

There is, however, and very happily, an interval of six or seven years, relative to which I have exact references, in a collection of letters copied from the originals, which are in the hands of Monsieur du Peyrou. This collection, which concludes in 1760, comprehends the whole time of my residence at the Hermitage, and my great quarrel with those who called themselves my friends — that memorable epoch of my life, and the source of all my other misfortunes. With respect to more recent original letters which may remain in my possession, and are but few in number, instead of transcribing them at the end of the collection, too voluminous to enable me to deceive the vigilance of my Arguses, I will copy them into the work itself whenever they appear to furnish any explanation, be this either for or against myself; for I am not under the least apprehension lest the reader should forget I make my confession, and believe that I make my apology; but he must not expect that I shall conceal the truth when it testifies in my favour.

This second part, it is to be remembered, contains nothing in common with the first except truth, nor has any other advantage over it but the importance of the facts; with that exception, it must be in every way inferior. I wrote the first with pleasure, with satisfaction, and at my ease, at Wootton, or in the Château de Trye. Everything I had to recollect was a new enjoyment. I returned to their contemplation with fresh pleasure, and without constraint gave those touches to my descriptions which most flattered my imagination. At present my brain and memory are so weak as to render me almost incapable of every kind of application: my present undertaking is the result of constraint, and a heart full of sorrow. I have nothing to treat of but misfortunes, treacheries, perfidies, and circumstances equally afflicting. I would give the world, could I bury in the obscurity

of time everything I have to say, and which, in spite of myself, I am obliged to relate. I am, at the same time, under the necessity of being mysterious and subtle, of endeavouring to mislead, and of descending to things the most foreign to my nature. The ceiling under which I write has eyes; the walls of my chamber have ears. Surrounded by spies and by vigilant and malevolent watchers, disturbed and my attention diverted, I hastily commit to paper a few broken sentences, which I have scarcely time to read, and still less to correct. I know that, notwithstanding the vast barriers which are piled up around me, my enemies are afraid lest truth should escape by some little opening. What means can I take to launch it to the world? This I attempt with but few hopes of success. The reader will judge whether or not such a situation furnishes the means of agreeable descriptions, or of giving them a seductive colouring! I therefore forewarn such as may undertake to read this work that nothing can secure them from weariness in the prosecution of their task, unless it be the desire of becoming more fully acquainted with a man, and a sincere love of justice and truth.

In my first part I brought down my narrative to my departure, with regret, for Paris, leaving my heart at Les Charmettes, and there building my last castle in the air, intending some day to return to the feet of Mamma, restored to herself, with the treasures I should have acquired, and depending upon my system of music as upon a certain fortune.

I made some stay at Lyons to visit my acquaintance, procure letters of recommendation to Paris, and to sell my books of geometry which I had brought with me. I was well received by all whom I knew. Monsieur and Madame de Mably seemed pleased to see me again, and several times invited me to dinner. At their house I

became acquainted with the Abbé de Mably, as I had already been with the Abbé de Condillac, both of whom were on a visit to their brother. The Abbé de Mably gave me letters to Paris; among others, one to Monsieur de Fontenelle, and another to the Comte de Caylus. These were very agreeable acquaintances, especially the first, to whose friendship for me his death only put an end, and from whom, in our private conversations, I received advice which I ought to have more exactly followed.

I likewise saw Monsieur Bordes, with whom I had been long acquainted, and who had frequently obliged me with the greatest cordiality and the most real pleasure; he was no less friendly now. He it was who enabled me to sell my books; and he also gave me from himself and others good recommendations to Paris. I again saw the Intendant, for whose acquaintance I was indebted to Monsieur Bordes, and who procured my introduction to the Duc de Richelieu, who was then passing through Lyons. Monsieur Pallu presented me. Monsieur de Richelieu received me well, and invited me to come and see him at Paris. I did so several times, although this great acquaintance, of which I shall frequently have occasion to speak, was never of any utility to me.

I visited the Musician David, who, in one of my former journeys, and in my distress, had rendered me service. He had either lent or given me a cap and a pair of stockings, which I have never returned, nor has he ever asked me for them, although we have since that time frequently seen each other. I however made him a present, something like an equivalent. I would say more upon this subject, were what I have owed in question; but I have to speak of what I have done, which unfortunately is far from being the same thing.

I also saw the noble and generous Perrichon, and not without feeling the effects of his accustomed munificence;

for he made me the same present he had previously made to the elegant Bernard, by paying for my place in the diligence. I visited the surgeon Parisot, the best and most beneficent of men; as also his beloved Godefroi, who had lived with him ten years, and whose merit chiefly consisted in her gentle manners and goodness of heart. It was impossible to see this woman without interest, or to leave her without regret, for she was in the last stage of consumption, of which disease she shortly afterwards died. Nothing better shows the inclinations of a man than the nature of his attachments.[1] Those who had once seen the gentle Godefroi immediately knew the good and amiable Parisot.

I was much obliged to all these good people, but I afterwards neglected them all; not from ingratitude, but from that invincible indolence which so often resembles it in my case. The remembrance of their services has never been effaced from my heart; but I could more easily have proved my gratitude than assiduously have made it manifest. Exactitude in correspondence is what I never could observe; the moment I begin to relax, the shame and embarrassment of repairing my fault make me aggravate it, and I entirely desist from writing; I have therefore been silent, and appeared to forget them. Parisot and Perrichon took not the least notice of my negligence, and I ever found them the same; but, twenty years afterwards, it will be seen, in Monsieur Bordes, to

[1] Unless he be deceived in his original choice, or she to whom he attaches himself changes her character by an extraordinary concurrence of causes, which is not absolutely impossible. Were this consequence to be admitted without modification, Socrates must be judged by his wife Xantippe, and Dion by his friend Calippus, which would be the most false and iniquitous judgment ever made. However, let no injurious application be here made to my wife. She is, indeed, weaker and more easily deceived than I at first imagined, but by her pure and excellent character, quite exempt from malice, she is worthy of all my esteem, and shall have it while I live. — R.

what a degree the self-love of a wit can make him carry his vengeance when he feels himself neglected.

Before I leave Lyons, I must not forget an amiable person whom I again saw with more pleasure than ever, and who left in my heart the most tender remembrance. This was Mademoiselle Serre, of whom I have spoken in my first part; I renewed my acquaintance with her whilst I was at Monsieur de Mably's. Being now more at leisure, I saw her more frequently, and she made the most sensible impressions on my heart. I had some reason to believe her own was not unfavourable to my pretensions; but she honoured me with her confidence so far as to remove from me all temptation to abuse it. She had no fortune, and in this respect exactly resembled myself; our situations were too similar to permit us to become united; and with the views I then had, I was far from thinking of marriage. She gave me to understand that a young merchant, one Monsieur Genève, seemed to wish to obtain her hand. I saw him once or twice at her lodgings; he appeared to me to be an honest man, and this was his general character. Persuaded she would be happy with him, I was desirous he should marry her, which he afterwards did; and, that I might not disturb their innocent love, I hastened my departure, offering up for the happiness of that charming woman prayers which, here below, alas! were effectual only for a brief period; for I afterwards heard she died in the second or third year after her marriage. My mind, during the journey, was wholly absorbed in tender regret. I felt — and since that time, when these circumstances have been present to my recollection, have frequently felt the same — that although the sacrifices made to virtue and our duty may sometimes be painful, we are well rewarded by the agreeable remembrance they leave engraven in our hearts.

I this time saw Paris in as favourable a point of view

as it had appeared to me in an unfavourable one on my first journey: not that my ideas of its brilliancy arose from the splendour of my lodgings; for, in consequence of an address given me by Monsieur Bordes, I resided at the Hôtel Saint-Quentin, Rue des Cordiers, near the Sorbonne — a vile street, a miserable hotel, and a wretched apartment, but nevertheless a house in which several men of merit, such as Gresset, Bordes, the Abbé de Mably, the Abbé de Condillac, and several others, of whom unfortunately I found not one, had taken up their quarters; but I there met with Monsieur de Bonnefond, a man unacquainted with the world, lame, litigious, and who affected to be a purist. To him I owe the acquaintance of Monsieur Roguin, at present the oldest friend I have, and by whose means I became acquainted with the philosopher Diderot, of whom I shall subsequently have occasion to say a good deal.

I arrived at Paris in the autumn of 1741, with fifteen louis in my purse, my comedy of *Narcisse* and my musical project. These composed my whole resources; consequently, I had not much time to lose before I attempted to turn the latter to some advantage. I therefore hastened to make use of my recommendations. A young man who arrives at Paris with a tolerable figure, and announces himself by his talents, is sure to be well received. This was my good fortune, which procured me some pleasures without leading to anything solid. Of all the persons to whom I was recommended, three only were useful to me — Monsieur Damesin, a gentleman of Savoy, at that time equerry, and I believe favourite, of the Princesse de Carignan; Monsieur de Boze, secretary to the Academy of Inscriptions, and keeper of the medals of the King's Cabinet; and Père Castel, a Jesuit, author of the 'clavecin oculaire.' All these recommendations, except that to Monsieur Damesin, were given me by the Abbé de Mably.

Monsieur Damesin provided me with that which was most needful, by means of two persons with whom he brought me acquainted. One was Monsieur de Gasc, Président à mortier of the Parliament of Bordeaux, and who played very well upon the violin; the other, the Abbé de Léon, who then lodged in the Sorbonne, a young nobleman, extremely amiable, who died in the flower of his age, after having for a moment, so to speak, made a figure in the world under the name of the Chevalier de Rohan. Both these gentlemen had an inclination to learn composition. In this I gave them lessons for a few months, by which means my decreasing purse received some little aid. The Abbé de Léon conceived a friendship for me, and wished me to become his secretary; but he was far from being rich, and all the salary he could offer me was eight hundred francs, which, with great regret, I refused, since it was insufficient to defray the expenses of my lodging, food, and clothing.

I was well received by Monsieur de Boze. He had a thirst for knowledge, of which he possessed not a little, but was somewhat pedantic. Madame de Boze might have been taken for his daughter; she was lively, and had the airs of a *petite maîtresse*. I sometimes dined with them, and it is impossible to be more awkward than I was in her presence. Her easy manner intimidated me, and rendered mine more ridiculous. When she presented me with a plate, I modestly put forward my fork to take one of the least bits of what she offered me, which made her give the plate to her servant, turning her head aside that I might not see her laugh. She had not the least suspicion that in the head of the country fellow there was some small portion of wit. Monsieur de Boze presented me to Monsieur de Réaumur, his friend, who came to dine with him every Friday, the day on which the Academy of Sciences met. He mentioned to him my project, and the desire

I had of having it examined by the Academy. Monsieur de Réaumur consented to make the proposal, and his offer was accepted. On the day appointed I was introduced and presented by him, and on the same day, August 22nd, 1742, I had the honour to read to the Academy the memoir I had prepared for that purpose. Although this illustrious assembly was assuredly very imposing, I was less intimidated on this occasion than I had been in the presence of Madame de Boze; and I got tolerably well through my reading and the answers I was obliged to give. The memoir was well received, and acquired me some compliments, by which I was equally surprised and flattered, hardly imagining that, before an Academy, whoever was not a member of it could have common sense. The persons appointed to examine my system were Messieurs de Mairan, Hellot, and de Fouchy, all three men of merit, indeed, but not one of whom understood music, at least not enough to enable them to judge of my project.

[1742.] During my conferences with these gentlemen, I was convinced, with no less certainty than surprise, that, if men of learning have sometimes fewer prejudices than others, they more tenaciously retain those they have. However weak or false most of their objections were, and although I answered them with great timidity, and, I confess, in bad terms, yet with decisive reasons, I never once made myself understood, or seemed to satisfy them. I was constantly surprised at the facility with which, by the aid of a few sonorous phrases, they refuted, without having comprehended me. They had raked up, I know not whence, the knowledge that a monk called Père Souhaitti had formerly invented a mode of noting the gamut by ciphers — a sufficient proof for them that my system was not new. This might, perhaps, be the case;

for, although I had never heard of Père Souhaitti, and notwithstanding his manner of writing the seven plain-song notes without attending to the octaves was not, under any point of view, worthy of entering into competition with my simple and commodious invention for easily noting by ciphers every possible kind of music, keys, rests, octaves, measure, time and length of notes — things on which Souhaitti had never thought — it was nevertheless true that, with respect to the elementary expression of the seven notes, he was the first inventor. But besides their giving to this primitive invention more importance than was due to it, they went still further, and whenever they spoke of the fundamental principles of the system talked nonsense. The greatest advantage of my scheme was to supersede transpositions and keys, so that the same piece of music was noted and transposed at will by means of the change of a single initial letter at the head of the air. These gentlemen had heard from the conventional music-masters of Paris that the method of executing by transposition was a bad one; and on this authority converted the most evident advantage of my system into an invincible objection against it, and affirmed that my mode of notation was good for vocal music, but bad for instrumental, instead of concluding, as they ought to have done, that it was good for vocal, and still better for instrumental. On their report the Academy granted me a certificate full of fine compliments, amidst which it appeared that in reality it judged my system to be neither new nor useful. I did not think proper to ornament with such a paper the work entitled *Dissertation sur la Musique Moderne*, by which I appealed to the public.

I had reason to remark on this occasion that, even with a narrow understanding, the sole but profound knowledge of a thing is preferable for the purpose of judging of it

to all the lights resulting from a cultivation of the sciences, when to these a particular study of that in question has not been joined. The only solid objection to my system was made by Rameau. I had scarcely explained it to him before he discovered its weak part. 'Your signs,' said he, 'are very good, inasmuch as they clearly and simply determine the length of notes, exactly represent intervals, and show the simple in the double note, which the common notation does not do; but they are objectionable on account of their requiring an operation of the mind, which cannot always accompany the rapidity of execution. The position of our notes,' continued he, 'is described to the eye without the concurrence of this operation. If two notes, one very high and the other very low, be joined by a series of intermediate ones, I see at the first glance the progress from one to the other by conjoined degrees; but in your system, to perceive this series, I must necessarily run over your ciphers one after the other; the glance of the eye is here useless.' The objection appeared to me insurmountable, and I instantly assented to it. Although it be simple and striking, nothing can suggest it to the intellect but great knowledge and practice of the art, and it is by no means astonishing that not one of the academicians should have thought of it. But what creates much surprise is, that these men of great learning, and who possess so much knowledge, should so little know that each ought to confine his judgment to that with which he is really conversant.

My frequent visits to the literati appointed to examine my system, and the other academicians, gave me an opportunity of becoming acquainted with the most distinguished men of letters in Paris, and by this means the acquaintance that would have been the consequence of my sudden admission amongst them, which afterwards

came to pass, was already established. With respect to the present moment, absorbed in my system of music, I obstinately adhered to my intention of effecting a revolution in the art, and by that means of acquiring a celebrity which, in the fine arts, is in Paris mostly accompanied by fortune. I shut myself in my chamber and laboured three or four months with inexpressible ardour, in recasting into a work for the public eye the memoir I had read before the Academy. The difficulty was to find a bookseller to take my manuscript; and this on account of the necessary expenses for new types, and because booksellers give not their money by handfuls to young authors; although to me it seemed but just that my work should render me the bread I had eaten while employed in its composition.

Bonnefond introduced me to the elder Quillau, with whom I agreed to divide the profits, without reckoning the privilege, of which I paid the whole expense. Such were the future proceedings of this Quillau, that I lost the expenses of my privilege, never having received a liard from that edition, which probably had but very middling success, although the Abbé Desfontaines had promised to give it celebrity, and other journalists had spoken of it very favourably.

The greatest obstacle to making the experiment of my system was the fear, in case of its not being received, of losing the time necessary to learn it. To this I answered that my notes rendered the idea so clear that, if one desired to learn music by means of the ordinary characters, time would yet be gained in beginning with mine. To prove this by experience, I taught music gratis to a young American lady, Mademoiselle des Roulins, with whom Monsieur Roguin had brought me acquainted. In three months she read every kind of music by means of my notation, and sang at sight better than I did myself any

piece that was not too difficult. This success was convincing, but not known; any other person would have filled the journals with the details, but, with some talents for discovering useful things, I never have possessed that of setting them off to advantage.

Thus was my heron-fountain again broken; but this time I was thirty years of age, and in the streets of Paris, where it is impossible to live on air. The resolution I took upon this occasion will astonish none but those by whom the first part of these memoirs has not been read with attention. I had just made efforts as great as they were fruitless, and was in need of relaxation. Instead of sinking with despair, I gave myself up quietly to my indolence and to the care of Providence; and, the better to allow time for its assistance, I laid down a plan for the slow expenditure of a few louis which still remained in my possession, regulating the expense of my simple pleasures without retrenching it, going to the café but every other day, and to the theatre but twice a week. With respect to the gratification of sensual inclinations, I had no retrenchment to make, never having in the whole course of my life applied so much as a sou to that use except once, an occasion of which I shall soon have to speak.

The security, voluptuousness, and confidence with which I gave myself up to this indolent and solitary life, which I had not the means of continuing for three months, is one of the singularities of my life and the oddities of my disposition. The extreme desire I had that the public should think of me was precisely what discouraged me from showing myself; and the necessity of paying visits rendered them to such a degree insupportable that I ceased visiting the academicians and other men of letters with whom I had cultivated an acquaintance. Marivaux, the Abbé de Mably, and Fontenelle were almost the

only persons whom I sometimes went to see. To the first I showed my comedy of *Narcisse*. He was pleased with it, and had the goodness to retouch it here and there. Diderot, younger than these, was much about my own age. He was fond of music, and knew it theoretically. We conversed together, and he communicated to me some of his literary projects. This soon formed betwixt us a more intimate connection, which lasted fifteen years, and which probably would still exist had not I, unfortunately, and by his own fault, thrown myself into the same profession.

It would be impossible to imagine in what manner I employed this short and precious interval which still remained to me, before circumstances should force me to beg my bread: in learning by memory passages from the poets which I had learned and forgotten a hundred times. Every morning, at ten o'clock, I went to walk in the Luxembourg with a Virgil and a Rousseau in my pocket, and there until the hour of dinner I passed away the time in restoring to my memory a sacred ode or a bucolic, without being discouraged through forgetting, by the study of the morning, what I had learned the evening before. I recollected that after the defeat of Nicias at Syracuse, the captive Athenians obtained a livelihood by reciting the poems of Homer. The use I made of this erudition to ward off misery was to exercise my happy memory by learning all the poets by rote.

I had another expedient, not less solid, in the game of chess, to which I regularly dedicated, at Maugis' café, the evenings on which I did not go to the theatre. I thus became acquainted with Monsieur de Légal, a Monsieur Husson, Philidor, and all the great chess-players of the day, without becoming any more expert. However, I had no doubt but, in the end, I should become superior to

them all, and this, in my own opinion, was a sufficient resource. The same manner of reasoning served me in every folly to which I felt myself inclined. I said to myself: Whoever excels in anything is sure to be well received in society. Let me, therefore, excel, no matter in what, I shall certainly be sought after; opportunities will present themselves, and my own merit will do the rest. This childishness was not the sophism of my reason; it was that of my indolence. Dismayed at the great and rapid efforts which would have been necessary to call forth my endeavours, I strove to flatter my idleness, and by arguments suitable to the purpose veiled from my own eyes the shame of such a state.

I thus calmly waited for the moment when I was to be without money; and had not Père Castel, whom I sometimes went to see in my way to the café, roused me from my lethargy, I believe I should have seen myself reduced to my last sou without the least emotion. Père Castel was a madman, but a good man upon the whole; he was sorry to see me thus impoverish myself to no purpose. 'Since musicians and the learned,' said he, 'do not sing by your scale, change the string, and apply to the women. You will perhaps succeed better with them. I have spoken of you to Madame de Beuzenval; go to her from me; she is a good woman, who will be glad to see the countryman of her son and husband. You will find at her house Madame de Broglie, her daughter, who is a woman of wit. Madame Dupin is another to whom I have mentioned you; carry her your work; she is desirous of seeing you, and will receive you well. Nothing is done in Paris without the women. They are the curves, of which the wise are the asymptotes — they incessantly approach each other, but never touch.'

After having from day to day delayed these very dis-

agreeable steps, I at length took courage and called upon Madame de Beuzenval. She received me with kindness, and Madame de Broglie entering the chamber, she said to her: 'Daughter, this is Monsieur Rousseau, of whom Père Castel has spoken to us.' Madame de Broglie complimented me upon my work, and, going to her harpsichord, proved to me she had already given it some attention. Perceiving it to be about one o'clock, I prepared to leave. Madame de Beuzenval said to me: 'You are at a great distance from the quarter in which you reside; stay and dine here.' I did not want asking a second time. A quarter of an hour afterwards, I understood, by a word or two, that the dinner to which she had invited me was that of her servants' hall. Madame de Beuzenval was a very good kind of woman, but of a limited understanding, and too full of her illustrious Polish nobility — she had no idea of the respect due to talents. On this occasion, likewise, she judged me by my manner rather than by my dress, which, although very plain, was very neat, and by no means announced a man to dine with servants. I had too long forgotten the way to the place where they eat to be inclined to take it again. Without suffering my anger to appear, I told Madame de Beuzenval that an affair of a trifling nature, which I had just recollected, obliged me to return home, and I immediately prepared to depart. Madame de Broglie approached her mother, and whispered in her ear a few words, which had their effect. Madame de Beuzenval rose to prevent me from going, and said, 'I expect that you will do us the honour to dine with us.' In this case, I thought to show pride would be a mark of folly, and I determined to stay. The goodness of Madame de Broglie had, besides, made an impression upon me, and rendered her interesting in my eyes. I was very glad to dine with her, and hoped that when she knew

me better she would not regret having procured me that honour. Monsieur le Président de Lamoignon — very intimate with the family — dined there also. He, as well as Madame de Broglie, was a master of all the modish and fashionable small-talk of Paris. Poor Jean-Jacques was unable to make a figure in this way. I had sense enough not to pretend to it, and was silent. Happy would it have been for me had I always possessed the same wisdom — I should not be in the abyss into which I am now fallen.

I was vexed at my own stupidity, and at being unable to justify to Madame de Broglie what she had done in my favour. After dinner, I thought of my ordinary resource. I had in my pocket an epistle in verse, written to Parisot during my residence at Lyons. This fragment was not without some fire, which I increased by my manner of reading, and made them all three shed tears. Whether it was vanity, or really the truth, I thought the eyes of Madame de Broglie seemed to say to her mother, 'Well, mamma, was I wrong in telling you this man was fitter to dine with us than with your women?' Until then my heart had been rather burdened, but after this revenge I felt myself satisfied. Madame de Broglie, carrying her favourable opinion of me rather too far, thought I should immediately acquire fame in Paris, and become a favourite with fine ladies. To guide my inexperience, she gave me *The Confessions of the Comte de* ——. 'This book,' said she, 'is a mentor, of which you will stand in need in the great world. You will do well by sometimes consulting it.' I kept the book upwards of twenty years, with a sentiment of gratitude to her from whose hands I had received it, although I frequently laughed at the opinion the lady seemed to have of my merit in gallantry. From the moment I had read the work, I was desirous of acquiring the friendship of the author. My inclination led

me right; he is the only real friend I have ever possessed amongst men of letters.[1]

From this time I thought I might depend on the services of Madame la Baronne de Beuzenval, and Madame la Marquise de Broglie, and that they would not long leave me without resource. In this I was not deceived. But I must now speak of my first visit to Madame Dupin, which produced more lasting consequences.

Madame Dupin was, as all know, the daughter of Samuel Bernard and Madame Fontaine. There were three sisters, who might be called the Three Graces: Madame de La Touche, who had a little intrigue in England with the Duke of Kingston; Madame d'Arty, the mistress and, what is far more, the friend, the only sincere friend, of the Prince de Conti — an adorable woman, as well by the sweetness and goodness of her charming character as by her agreeable wit and incessant cheerfulness; lastly, Madame Dupin, more beautiful than either of her sisters, and the only one who has not been reproached with levity of conduct.

She was the reward of the hospitality of Monsieur Dupin, to whom her mother gave her in marriage, with the place of Farmer-general and an immense fortune, in return for the good reception he had given her in his province. When I saw her for the first time, she was still one of the finest women in Paris. She received me at her toilette; her arms were uncovered, her hair dishevelled, and her dressing-gown ill fastened. This scene was new to me; it was too powerful for my poor head, I became confused, my senses wandered; in short, I was violently smitten by Madame Dupin.

[1] I was so long of the same opinion, and so perfectly convinced of its being well founded, that since my return to Paris I confided to him the manuscript of my *Confessions*. The suspicious Jean-Jacques never suspected perfidy and falsehood until he had been their victim. — R.

My confusion was not prejudicial to me: she did not perceive it. She kindly received the book, and the author; spoke intelligently of my plan, sang, accompanied herself on the harpsichord, kept me to dinner, and placed me at table by her side. Less than this would have turned my brain; I became infatuated. She permitted me to visit her, and I abused the permission. I went to see her almost every day, and dined with her twice or thrice a week. I burned with inclination to speak, but never dared attempt it. Several circumstances increased my natural timidity. Permission to visit in an opulent family was a door open to fortune, and in my situation I was unwilling to run the risk of shutting it against myself. Madame Dupin, amiable as she was, was serious and unanimated; I found nothing in her manners sufficiently alluring to embolden me. Her house, at that time as brilliant as any other in Paris, was frequented by societies the less numerous as the persons by whom they were composed were chosen on account of some distinguished merit. She was fond of seeing every one who had claims to a marked superiority, the nobility, men of letters, and fine women. No person was seen in her circle but dukes, ambassadors, and those on whom orders had been conferred. Madame la Princesse de Rohan, Madame la Comtesse de Forcalquier, Madame de Mirepoix, Madame de Brignolé, and Lady Hervey passed for her intimate friends. Monsieur de Fontenelle, the Abbé de Saint-Pierre, the Abbé Sallier, Monsieur de Fourmont, Monsieur de Bernis, Monsieur de Buffon, and Monsieur de Voltaire, were frequenters of her circle and her dinners. If her reserved manner did not attract many young people, her society inspired the greater awe, as it was composed of graver persons, and the poor Jean-Jacques had no reason to flatter himself that he should be able to take a distinguished part in the midst of such.

I therefore had not courage to speak; but, no longer able to contain myself, I ventured to write. For the first two days she said not a word to me upon the subject. On the third day she returned me my letter, accompanying it with a few exhortations which froze my blood. I attempted to speak, but my words expired upon my lips; my sudden passion was extinguished with my hopes, and after a declaration in form, I continued to live with her upon the same terms as before, without so much as speaking to her even by the language of the eyes.

I thought my folly was forgotten, but I was deceived. Monsieur de Francueil, son to Monsieur Dupin, and stepson to Madame Dupin, was much the same age with herself and me. He had wit, a good person, and might have had pretensions. This was said to be the case, and probably proceeded from his stepmother having given him an ugly wife of a mild disposition, with whom, as well as with her husband, she lived upon the best of terms. Monsieur de Francueil was fond of talents in others, and cultivated those he possessed. Music, which he understood very well, was a means of producing a connection between us. I frequently saw him, and he soon gained my friendship. He, however, suddenly gave me to understand that Madame Dupin thought my visits too frequent, and begged me to discontinue them. Such a compliment would have been proper when she returned my letter; but eight or ten days afterwards, and without any new cause, it appeared to me ill-timed. This rendered my situation the more singular, as Monsieur and Madame de Francueil still continued to give me the same good reception as before. I, however, made the intervals between my visits longer; and I should have wholly ceased calling on them, had not Madame Dupin, by another unexpected caprice, sent to desire I would for eight or ten days take care of her son, who, changing his preceptor,

remained alone during that interval. I passed this time in such torments as nothing but the pleasure of obeying Madame Dupin could render supportable; for poor Chenonceaux began to suffer from that craziness which well-nigh effected the dishonour of his family, and led to his death in the Isle of Bourbon. Whilst I was with him I confined my efforts to preventing him from harming himself or others; yet was this no easy task, and I would not have undertaken to pass eight other days like these, had Madame Dupin given me herself for the recompense.

Monsieur de Francueil conceived a friendship for me, and I studied with him. We began together a course of chemistry at Rouelle's. That I might be nearer at hand, I left the hotel Saint-Quentin, and went to lodge at the Tennis Court, Rue Verdelet, which leads into the Rue Plâtrière, where Monsieur Dupin lived. There, in consequence of a neglected cold, I contracted an inflammation of the lungs that had like to have carried me off. In my younger days I frequently suffered from inflammatory disorders, pleurisies, and especially quinsies, to which I was very subject, and which frequently brought me near enough to death to familiarise me with its image. During my convalescence I had leisure to reflect upon my situation, and to lament my timidity, weakness, and indolence; these, notwithstanding the fire with which I found myself inflamed, left me to languish in an inactivity of mind, continually on the verge of misery. The evening preceding the day on which I was taken ill, I went to hear an opera by Royer, then being performed: the name I have forgotten. Notwithstanding my prejudice in favour of the talents of others, which has ever made me distrustful of my own, I still thought the music feeble, and devoid of animation and invention. I sometimes had the vanity to flatter myself that I could do better than that. But the terrible idea I had formed of

the composition of an opera, and the importance I heard men of the profession affix to such an undertaking, instantly discouraged me, and made me blush at having so much as thought of it. Besides, where was I to find a person to write the words, and one who would give himself the trouble of turning the poetry to my liking? These ideas of music and the opera had possession of my mind during my illness, and in the delirium of my fever I composed songs, duets, and choruses. I am certain I composed two or three little pieces *di prima intenzione*, perhaps worthy of the admiration of masters, could they have heard them executed. Oh! could an account be taken of the dreams of a man in a fever, what great and sublime things would sometimes be seen to result from his delirium!

These subjects of music and opera still engaged my attention during my convalescence, but my ideas were less energetic. Long and frequent meditations, often involuntary, made such an impression upon my mind, that I resolved to attempt both words and music. This was not the first time I had undertaken so difficult a task. Whilst I was at Chambéri I had composed an opera entitled 'Iphis et Anaxarète,' which I had the good sense to throw into the fire. At Lyons I composed another entitled 'La Découverte du Nouveau-Monde,' which, after having read to Monsieur Bordes, the Abbé Mably, the Abbé Trublet, and others, had met the same fate, notwithstanding I had set the prologue and the first act to music, and although David, after examining the composition, had told me there were passages in it worthy of Buononcini.

On the present occasion, before I began the work, I took time to consider of my plan. In an heroic ballet I proposed three different subjects, in three acts, each detached from the others, and set to music of a different

character, taking for each subject the amours of a poet. I entitled this opera 'Les Muses Galantes.' My first act, in music strongly characterised, was 'Tasso'; the second, in tender harmony, 'Ovid'; the third, entitled 'Anacreon,' was to partake of the gaiety of the dithyrambus. I tried my skill on the first act, and applied myself to it with an ardour which made me feel for the first time the delightful flow of thought inspired by composition. One evening, as I entered the opera-house, feeling myself strongly incited and overpowered by my ideas, I put my money again into my pocket, returned to my apartment, locked the door, and, having closely drawn all the curtains, that every ray of light might be excluded, I went to bed, abandoning myself entirely to this musical and poetical œstrum, and in seven or eight hours rapidly composed the greater part of an act. I can truly say my love for the Princess of Ferrara — for I was Tasso for the moment — and my noble and lofty sentiments with respect to her unjust brother, procured me a night a hundred times more delicious than one passed in the arms of the Princess would have been. In the morning but a very little of what I had done remained in my head, but this little, almost effaced by sleep and lassitude, still sufficiently evinced the energy of the pieces of which it was the scattered remains.

I did not proceed far with my undertaking at this time, being interrupted by other affairs. Whilst I attached myself to the Dupin family, Madame de Beuzenval and Madame de Broglie, whom I continued to visit occasionally, had not forgotten me. The Comte de Montaigu, captain in the Guards, had just been appointed Ambassador to Venice. He was made Ambassador by Barjac,[1] to whom he assiduously paid his court. His

[1] Cardinal de Henry's valet-de-chambre.

brother, the Chevalier de Montaigu, gentilhomme de la manche to Monseigneur le Dauphin, was acquainted with these two ladies, and with the Abbé Alary, of the French Academy, whom I sometimes visited. Madame de Broglie, having heard that the Ambassador was seeking a secretary, proposed me to him. A conference was opened between us. I asked a salary of fifty louis, a trifle for an employment which required me to make some appearance. The Ambassador was unwilling to give more than a hundred pistoles, leaving me to make the journey at my own expense. The proposal was ridiculous. We could not agree, and Monsieur de Francueil, who used all his efforts to prevent my departure, prevailed. I stayed, and Monsieur de Montaigu set out on his journey, taking with him another secretary, one Monsieur Follau, who had been recommended to him by the Office for Foreign Affairs. They no sooner arrived at Venice than they quarrelled. Follau, perceiving he had to do with a madman, left him there, and Monsieur de Montaigu having nobody with him, except a young abbé named Monsieur de Binis, who wrote under the secretary, and was unfit to succeed him, had recourse to me. The Chevalier his brother, a man of wit, by giving me to understand that there were advantages annexed to the place of secretary, prevailed upon me to accept the thousand francs. I was paid twenty louis for my journey, and I departed.

[1743–1744.] At Lyons I would most willingly have taken the road to Mont Cenis, to visit on the way my poor Mamma. But I went down the Rhône, and embarked at Toulon, as well on account of the war, and from a motive of economy, as to obtain a passport from Monsieur de Mirepoix, who then commanded in Provence, and to whom I was recommended. Monsieur de

Montaigu, not being able to do without me, wrote letter after letter desiring I would hasten my journey; this, however, an incident considerably prolonged.

It was at the time of the plague at Messina. The English fleet had anchored there, and visited the felucca on board of which I was, and this circumstance subjected us, on our arrival at Genoa, after a long and difficult voyage, to a quarantine of one-and-twenty days. The passengers had the choice of performing it on board or in the lazaretto, which we were told was not yet furnished. They all chose the felucca. The insupportable heat, the closeness of the vessel, the impossibility of walking in it, and the vermin with which it swarmed, made me at all risks prefer the lazaretto. I was, therefore, conducted to a large building of two stories, quite empty, in which I found neither window, bed, table, nor chair — not so much as even a joint-stool or bundle of straw. My cloak, my night-sack, and my two trunks being brought me, I was shut in by great doors with huge locks, and remained at full liberty to walk at my ease from chamber to chamber and from story to story, everywhere finding the same solitude and nakedness.

This, however, did not induce me to repent that I had preferred the lazaretto to the felucca; and, like another Robinson Crusoe, I began to arrange myself for my one-and-twenty days, just as I should have done for my whole life. In the first place, I had the amusement of destroying the vermin I had caught in the felucca. As soon as I had got clear of these, by means of changing my clothes and linen, I proceeded to furnish the chamber I had chosen. I made a good mattress with my waistcoats and shirts; my napkins I converted, by sewing them together, into sheets; my dressing-gown into a counterpane, and my cloak into a pillow. I made myself a seat with one of my trunks laid flat, and a table with the other.

I took out some writing-paper and an inkstand, and distributed, in the manner of a library, a dozen books which I had with me. In a word, I so well arranged my few movables, that, except curtains and windows, I was almost as commodiously lodged in this lazaretto — absolutely empty as it was — as I had been at the Tennis Court in the Rue Verdelet. My dinners were served with no small degree of pomp; they were escorted by two grenadiers with fixed bayonets; the staircase was my dining-room, the landing-place my table, and the step served me for a seat, and as soon as my dinner was served up a little bell was rung to inform me that I might sit down to table. Between my repasts, when I did not either read or write, or work at the furnishing of my apartment, I went to walk in the burying-ground of the Protestants, which served me as a courtyard. From this place I ascended to a lanthorn which looked into the harbour, and from which I could see the ships come in and go out. In this manner I passed fourteen days, and should have thus passed the whole time of the quarantine without the least weariness, had not M. Joinville, envoy from France — to whom I found means to send a letter, vinegared, perfumed, and half burnt — procured eight days of the time to be taken off. These I spent at his house, where I confess I found myself much better lodged than in the lazaretto. He was extremely civil to me. Dupont, his secretary, was a good fellow; he introduced me, as well at Genoa as in the country, to several families, the company of which I found very agreeable, and I formed with him an acquaintance and commenced a correspondence which we kept up for a considerable length of time. I continued my journey, very agreeably, through Lombardy. I saw Milan, Verona, Brescia, and Padua, and at length arrived at Venice, where I was impatiently expected by the Ambassador.

I found three piles of despatches from the Court and from other Ambassadors, the ciphered part of which he had not been able to read, although he had all the keys necessary for that purpose. Never having been employed in any office, nor ever seen the cipher of a minister, I was at first apprehensive of meeting with some embarrassment; but I found that nothing could be more easy, and in less than a week I had deciphered the whole, which certainly was not worth the trouble; for, not to mention the little activity required in the embassy of Venice, it was not to such a man as this that a negotiation of even the most trifling importance would be confided. Until my arrival he had been much embarrassed, neither knowing how to dictate nor to write legibly. I was very useful to him, of which he was sensible, and he treated me well. To this he was also induced by another motive. Since the time of Monsieur de Froulay, his predecessor, whose head became deranged, the French consul, Monsieur Le Blond, had been charged with the affairs of the embassy, and, after the arrival of Monsieur de Montaigu, continued to manage them until he had put him into the track. Monsieur de Montaigu, hurt at this discharge of his duty by another, although he himself was incapable of it, chose to think that the consul played him false, and, as soon as I arrived, deprived him of the functions of secretary to the embassy, to give them to me. They were inseparable from the title, and he told me to take it. As long as I remained with him, he never sent any person except myself under this title to the Senate, or to conference, and upon the whole it was natural enough he should prefer having for secretary to the embassy a man attached to him, rather than a consul, or a clerk of office named by the Court.

This rendered my situation very agreeable, and prevented his gentlemen, who were Italians, as well as his

pages and most of his suite, from disputing precedence with me in his house. I made an advantageous use of the authority annexed to the title he had conferred upon me, by maintaining his *droit de liste* — that is, the freedom of his neighbourhood — against the attempts several times made to infringe it, a privilege which his Venetian officers took no care to defend. But, in addition, I never permitted banditti to take refuge there, although this would have produced me advantages of which his Excellency would not have disdained to partake.

He presumed, however, to claim a part of those of the secretaryship relating to what is called the chancery. It was in time of war, and there were many passports issued. For each of these a sequin was paid to the secretary, who made it out and countersigned it. All my predecessors had been paid this sequin by Frenchmen and others without distinction. I thought this unjust, and, though I was not a Frenchman, abolished it in favour of the French; but I so rigorously demanded my right from persons of every other nation, that the Marquis Scotti, brother to the favourite of the Queen of Spain, having asked for a passport without taking notice of the sequin, I sent to demand it — a boldness which the vindictive Italian did not forget. As soon as the new regulation I had made relative to passports was known, none but pretended Frenchmen, who in a gibberish the most mispronounced called themselves Provençals, Picards, or Burgundians, came to demand them. My ear being sufficiently fine, I was not thus made a dupe, and I am almost persuaded that not a single Italian ever cheated me of my sequin, and that not one Frenchman ever paid it. I was foolish enough to tell Monsieur de Montaigu, who was ignorant of everything that passed, what I had done. The word 'sequin' made him open his ears, and without giving me his opinion of the abolition of that tax upon

the French, he pretended that I ought to account to him for the others, promising me at the same time equivalent advantages. More resenting this meanness than concerned for my own interest, I firmly rejected his proposal. He insisted, and I grew warm. 'No, sir,' said I, with some heat, 'your Excellency may keep what belongs to you, but do not take from me that which is mine. I will not suffer you to touch a sou of it.' Perceiving that he could gain nothing by these means, he had recourse to others, and blushed not to tell me that, since I had appropriated to myself the profits of the chancery, it was but just I should pay the expenses. I was unwilling to dispute upon this subject, and from that time I furnished at my own expense ink, paper, wax, candle, tape, and even a new seal, for which he never reimbursed me to the amount of a liard. This, however, did not prevent my giving a small part of the produce of the passports to the Abbé de Binis, a good creature, and who was far from pretending to have the least right to any such thing. If he was obliging to me, my politeness to him was an equivalent, and we always lived together on the best of terms.

On the first trial I made of his talents in my official functions, I found him less troublesome than I feared he would have been, considering that he was a man without experience, in the service of an Ambassador who possessed no more than himself, and whose ignorance and obstinacy constantly counteracted everything that common-sense and some information inspired me with for his service and that of the King. The most reasonable thing which he did was to ally himself with the Marquis de Mari, Ambassador from Spain, an ingenious and artful man, who, had he wished so to do, might have led him by the nose, yet, on account of the union of the interests of the two crowns, he generally gave him good advice, which might have been of essential service, had not the other, by

joining his own opinion, counteracted it in the execution. The only business they had to conduct in concert with each other was to engage the Venetians to maintain their neutrality. These did not neglect to give the strongest assurances of their fidelity to their engagements at the same time that they publicly furnished munitions to the Austrian troops, and even recruits under the pretence of desertion. Monsieur de Montaigu, who, I believe, wished to render himself agreeable to the Republic, failed not on his part, notwithstanding my representations, to make me give assurance in all his despatches that the Venetians would never violate an article of the neutrality. The obstinacy and stupidity of this poor creature made me write and act extravagantly. I was obliged to be the agent of his folly, because he would have it so; but he sometimes rendered my employment insupportable and the functions of it almost impracticable. For example, he insisted on the greatest part of his despatches to the King, and of those to the minister, being written in cipher, although neither of them contained anything that required that precaution. I represented to him that between the Friday, the day the despatches from the Court arrived, and Saturday, on which ours were sent off, there was not sufficient time to write so much in cipher, and carry on besides the considerable correspondence with which I was charged for the same courier. He found an admirable expedient, which was to prepare on Thursday the answer to the despatches we were expected to receive on the next day. This appeared to him so happily imagined, that notwithstanding all I could say on the impossibility of the thing, and the absurdity of attempting its execution, I was obliged to comply during the whole time I afterwards remained with him; and, after having made notes of the few loose words he spoke to me in the course of the week, and some trivial circumstances which

I collected by hurrying from place to place, provided with these materials, I never once failed carrying to him on the Thursday morning a rough draft of the despatches which were to be sent off on Saturday, excepting the few additions and corrections I hastily made in answer to the letters which arrived on the Friday, and to which ours served for answer. He had another peculiarity, diverting enough, and which made his correspondence ridiculous beyond imagination. He sent back all information to its respective source, instead of making it follow its course. To Monsieur Amelot he transmitted the news of the Court; to Monsieur Maurepas, that of Paris; to Monsieur d'Havrincourt, the news from Sweden; to Monsieur de Chetardie, that from St. Petersburg; and sometimes to each of those the news they had respectively sent to him, and which I was employed to dress up in somewhat different terms. As he read nothing of what I laid before him, except the despatches from the Court, and signed those to other Ambassadors without reading them, this left me more at liberty to give what turn I thought proper to the latter, and in these therefore I made the articles of information cross each other. But it was impossible for me to give a rational turn to despatches of importance; and I thought myself happy when he did not take it into his head to cram into them an impromptu of a few lines after his manner. This obliged me to return and hastily transcribe the whole despatch decorated with his new nonsense, and honour it with the cipher, without which he would have refused his signature. I was frequently almost tempted, for the sake of his reputation, to cipher something different from what he had written; but, feeling that nothing could authorise such a deception, I left him to play the fool at his own risk, satisfying myself with having spoken to him with freedom, and discharged at any rate the duties of my station.

This is what I always did with an uprightness, a zeal, and a courage which merited on his part a very different recompense from that which in the end I received from him. It was time I should for once be what Heaven, which had endowed me with a happy disposition, what the education that had been given me by the best of women, and what I had given myself, had prepared me for, and I became so. Left to my own reflections, without a friend or adviser, without experience, in a foreign country, in the service of a foreign nation, surrounded by a crowd of knaves, who, for their own interest, and to avoid the scandal of good example, endeavoured to prevail upon me to imitate them, far from yielding to their solicitations, I rendered good service to France, to which I owed nothing, and to the Ambassador still better, as it was right and just I should do, to the utmost of my power. Irreproachable in a post sufficiently exposed to censure, I merited and obtained the esteem of the Republic, that of all the Ambassadors with whom we were in correspondence, and the affection of the French who resided at Venice; not even excepting the consul, whom with regret I supplanted in the functions which I knew belonged to him, and which occasioned me more embarrassment than they afforded satisfaction.

Monsieur de Montaigu, wholly giving himself up to the Marquis Mari, who paid no attention to the routine part of his duties, neglected them to such a degree that without me the French who were at Venice would not have perceived that an Ambassador from their nation resided there. Always put off without being heard when they stood in need of his protection, they became disgusted, and no longer appeared in his company or at his table, to which indeed he never invited them. I frequently did from my own impulse what it was his duty to have done: I rendered to the French who applied to me all the serv-

ices in my power. In any other country I should have done more; but, on account of my position, not being able to see persons in place, I was often obliged to apply to the consul, and the consul, who was settled in the country with his family, had many persons to oblige, which prevented him from acting as he otherwise would have done. However, perceiving him unwilling and afraid to speak, I ventured hazardous measures, which sometimes succeeded. I recollect one which still makes me laugh. No person would suspect that it is to me the playgoers of Paris owe Coralline and her sister Camille; nothing, however, can be more true. Véronèse, their father, had engaged himself with his children in the Italian company, and, after having received two thousand francs for the expenses of his journey, instead of setting out for France, quietly accepted an engagement in Venice at the Theatre of Saint Luke,[1] to which Coralline, child as she still was, drew great numbers of people. Monsieur le Duc de Gesvres, as first gentleman of the chamber, wrote to the Ambassador to claim the father and the daughter. Monsieur de Montaigu, when he gave me the letter, confined his instructions to saying, 'Voyez cela.' I went to Monsieur Le Blond to beg that he would speak to the patrician to whom the Theatre of Saint Luke belonged, and who, I believed, was named Zustiniani, that he might discharge Véronèse, who had engaged himself to the King. Le Blond, to whom the commission was not very agreeable, executed it badly. Zustiniani answered vaguely, and Véronèse was not discharged. I was piqued at this. It was during the Carnival, and, having taken the *bahute* and a mask, I set out for the Zustiniani Palace. Those who saw my gondola arrive with the livery of the Ambassador were lost in astonishment. Venice had never

[1] I am doubtful whether it was not Saint Samuel. Proper names continually escape me. — R.

seen such a thing. I entered, and caused myself to be announced by the name of *una siora maschera*. As soon as I was introduced I took off my mask, and told my name. The Senator turned pale, and appeared stupefied with surprise. 'Sir,' said I to him in Venetian, 'it is with much regret I importune your Excellency with this visit; but you have in your Theatre of Saint Luke a man named Véronèse, who is engaged for the service of the King, and whom you have been requested, but in vain, to give up. I come to claim him in the name of his Majesty.' My short harangue was effectual. I had no sooner left the palace than my man ran to communicate the adventure to the State Inquisitors, by whom he was severely reprimanded. Véronèse was discharged the same day. I sent him word that if he did not set off within a week I would have him arrested: he obeyed.

On another occasion I relieved from difficulty, solely by my own means, and almost without the assistance of any other person, the captain of a merchant-ship. This was one Captain Olivet, from Marseilles; the name of the vessel I have forgotten. His men had quarrelled with the Sclavonians in the service of the Republic, some violence had been committed, and the vessel was under so severe an embargo that nobody except the master was suffered to go on board, or leave it, without permission. He applied to the Ambassador, who would hear nothing he had to say. He afterwards went to the consul, who told him it was not an affair of commerce, and that he could not interfere in it. Not knowing what further steps to take, he applied to me. I told Monsieur de Montaigu that he ought to permit me to lay before the Senate a memoir on the subject. I do not recollect whether or not he consented, or whether I presented the memoir; but I perfectly remember that if I did it was ineffectual, and, the embargo still continuing, I took another method,

which succeeded. I inserted a relation of the affair in one of our letters to Monsieur de Maurepas, though I had difficulty in prevailing upon Monsieur de Montaigu to suffer the article to pass. I knew that our despatches, although their contents were insignificant, were opened at Venice. Of this I had a proof by finding the articles they contained verbatim in the gazette, a treachery of which I had in vain attempted to prevail upon the Ambassador to complain. My object in speaking of the affair in the letter was to turn the curiosity of the ministers of the Republic to advantage, to inspire them with some apprehensions, and to induce the State to release the vessel; for, had it been necessary to this effect to wait for an answer from the Court, the captain would have been ruined before it could have arrived. I did still more; I went alongside the vessel to make inquiries of the ship's company. I took with me the Abbé Patizel, chancellor of the consulate, who would rather have been excused, so much were these poor creatures afraid of displeasing the Senate. As I could not go on board, on account of the prohibition, I remained in my gondola, and there took the depositions, successively interrogating each of the mariners, and directing my questions in such a manner as to produce answers which might be to their advantage. I wished to prevail upon Patizel to put the questions and take the depositions himself, which, in fact, was more his business than mine; but to this he would not consent; he never once opened his mouth, and was very unwilling to sign the depositions after me. This step, somewhat bold, was, however, successful, and the vessel was released long before an answer came from the minister. The captain wished to make me a present, but, without being angry with him on that account, I tapped him on the shoulder, saying, 'Captain Olivet, can you imagine that he who does not receive from the French his fee for

passports, which he found his established right, is a man likely to sell them the King's protection?' He, however, insisted on giving me a dinner on board his vessel, which I accepted, and took with me the secretary to the Spanish embassy, whose name was Carrio — a man of wit and amiable manners — to partake of it. He has since been secretary to the embassy at Paris, and chargé-des-affaires. I had formed an intimate connection with him, after the example of our Ambassadors.

Happy should I have been if, when in the most disinterested manner I did all the service I could, I had known how to introduce sufficient order into all these little details, that I might not have been fooled into serving others at my own expense. But in employments similar to the one I held, in which the most trifling faults are of consequence, my whole attention was engaged in avoiding all such mistakes as might be detrimental to my service. Till the last moment I conducted everything relative to my immediate duty with the greatest order and exactness. Excepting a few errors which a forced precipitation made me commit in ciphering, and of which Monsieur Amelot's clerks once complained, neither the Ambassador nor any other person had ever the least reason to reproach me with negligence in any one of my functions. This is remarkable in a man so negligent and hasty as I am. But my memory sometimes failed me, and I was not sufficiently careful in the private affairs with which I was charged. However, a love of justice always made me take the loss on myself, and this voluntarily, before anybody thought of complaining. I will mention but one circumstance of this nature; it relates to my departure from Venice, and I afterwards felt the effects of it in Paris.

Our cook, whose name was Rousselot, had brought from France an old note for two hundred francs, which a

hairdresser, a friend of his, had received from a noble Venetian called Zanetto Nani, for the supply of perukes. Rousselot brought me the note, begging I would endeavour to obtain payment of some part of it, by way of accommodation. I knew, and he knew it also, that the constant custom of noble Venetians was, when once returned to their country, never to pay the debts they had contracted abroad. When means are taken to force them to payment, the wretched creditor finds so many delays and expenses that he becomes disgusted, and concludes by giving up his debt, or accepting the most trifling composition. I begged Monsieur Le Blond to speak to Zanetto. The Venetian acknowledged the note, but did not agree to payment. After a long dispute, he at length promised three sequins; but when Le Blond carried him the note, even these were not ready, and it was necessary to wait. In this interval happened my quarrel with the Ambassador, and I quitted his service. I had left the papers of the embassy in the greatest order, but the note of Rousselot was not to be found. Monsieur Le Blond assured me that he had given it me back. I knew him to be too honest a man to have the least doubt of the matter, but it was impossible for me to recollect what I had done with it. As Zanetto had acknowledged the debt, I desired Monsieur Le Blond to endeavour to obtain from him the three sequins on giving him a receipt for the amount, or to prevail upon him to renew the note by way of duplicate. Zanetto, knowing the note to be lost, would not agree to either. I offered Rousselot the three sequins from my own purse as a discharge of the debt. He refused them, and said I might settle the matter with the creditor in Paris, of whom he gave me the address. The hairdresser, having been informed of what had passed, would either have his note or the whole sum for which it was given. What, in my indignation, would

I have given to have found this accursed paper! I paid the two hundred francs, and that in my greatest distress. In this manner, the loss of the note produced to the creditor the payment of the whole sum, whereas, had it — unfortunately for him — been found, he would have had some difficulty in recovering even the ten crowns which his Excellency Zanetto Nani had promised to pay.

The talents I thought I felt in myself for my employment made me discharge its functions with satisfaction, and, except the society of my friend Carrio, and that of the virtuous Altuna, of whom I shall soon have occasion to speak, the innocent recreations of the Piazza San Marco, of the theatre, and of a few visits which we, for the most part, made together, my only pleasure was in the duties of my station. Although these were not considerable, especially with the aid of the Abbé de Binis, yet, as the correspondence was very extensive, and a war was on foot, I was a good deal employed. I applied to business the greater part of every morning, and on the days previous to the departure of the courier the evenings, sometimes till midnight. The rest of my time I gave to the study of the profession I had entered upon, and in which I hoped, from my successful beginning, to be advantageously employed in the future. In fact, I was in favour with every one, beginning with the Ambassador, who spoke highly of my services, and never complained of anything I did for him; his subsequent dissatisfaction proceeded from my having insisted on quitting him, in consequence of the useless complaints which I had frequently made. The Ambassadors and ministers of the King, with whom we were in correspondence, complimented him on the merit of his secretary, in a manner by which he ought to have been flattered, but which in his weak brain produced quite a contrary effect. He received one compliment in particular, relative to an affair

of importance, for which he never pardoned me. This deserves to be told more explicitly.

He was so incapable of undergoing constraint, that on Saturday, the day of the despatches for most of the Courts, he could not wait till the business was done before he went out, and, incessantly pressing me to hasten the despatches to the King and ministers, he signed them with precipitation, and immediately went I know not where, leaving most of the other letters without signature. This obliged me, when these last contained nothing but news, to convert them into journals; but when affairs which related to the King were in question it was necessary somebody should sign, and I did it. This once happened relative to some important advice which we had just received from Monsieur Vincent, the King's confidential agent at Vienna. The Prince de Lobkowitz was then marching to Naples, and the Comte de Gages had just made that memorable retreat, the finest military manœuvre of the whole century, which Europe has not sufficiently esteemed. The despatch informed us that a man, whose person Monsieur Vincent described, had set out from Vienna and was to pass through Venice on his way into the Abruzzo, where he was secretly to stir up the people at the approach of the Austrians. In the absence of Monsieur le Comte de Montaigu, who did not give himself the least concern about anything, I forwarded this advice in such a lucky moment to the Marquis de l'Hôpital, that it is perhaps to this poor Jean-Jacques, so abused and laughed at, that the House of Bourbon owes the preservation of the kingdom of Naples.

The Marquis de l'Hôpital, when he thanked his colleague, as was proper, spoke to him of his secretary, and mentioned the service he had just rendered to the common cause. The Comte de Montaigu, who in that affair had to

accuse himself of negligence, thought he perceived in this compliment something like a reproach, and spoke of it to me with signs of ill-humour. I had found it necessary to act in the same manner with the Comte de Castellane, Ambassador at Constantinople, as I had done with the Marquis de l'Hôpital, although in a matter of less importance. As there was no other conveyance to Constantinople than by the couriers, sent from time to time by the Senate to its Bayle, advice of their departure was given to the Ambassador of France, that he might write by them to his colleague, if he thought proper so to do. This advice was commonly sent a day or two beforehand; but Monsieur de Montaigu was held in so little respect that merely for the sake of form he was sent to a couple of hours before the courier set off. This frequently obliged me to write the despatch in his absence. Monsieur de Castellane in his answer made honourable mention of me; Monsieur de Jonville, at Genoa, did the same; hence arose new grievances.

I acknowledge I did not neglect opportunities of making myself known; but I never sought one improperly, and in serving well I thought I had a right to aspire to the natural reward of essential services — the esteem of those capable of judging and rewarding them. I will not say whether my exactness in discharging the duties of my employment was a just subject of complaint from the Ambassador; but I cannot refrain from declaring that it was the sole grievance he ever mentioned previous to our separation.

His house, which he had never put upon a good footing, was constantly filled with rabble; the French were ill-treated in it, and the ascendency was given to the Italians; of these even, the more honest part, who had long been in the service of the embassy, were indecently discharged, his first gentleman in particular, whom he

had taken from the Comte de Froulay, and who, if I remember rightly, was called Comte de Peati, or something very like that name. The second gentleman, chosen by Monsieur de Montaigu, was a Mantuan bandit, called Dominico Vitali, to whom the Ambassador intrusted the care of his house, and who had by means of flattery and sordid economy obtained his confidence and become his favourite, to the great prejudice of the few honest people he had still about him, and of the secretary who was at their head. The clear gaze of an upright man always gives inquietude to knaves. Nothing more was necessary to make Vitali conceive a hatred against me; but for this sentiment there was still another cause which rendered it more cruel. Of this I must give an account, that I may be condemned if I am found in the wrong.

The Ambassador had, according to custom, a box at each of the five theatres. Every day at dinner he named the theatre to which it was his intention to go. I chose after him, and the gentlemen disposed of the other boxes. When I went out I took the key of the box I had chosen. One day, Vitali not being in the way, I ordered the footman who attended on me to bring me the key at a house which I named to him. Vitali, instead of sending the key, said he had disposed of it. I was the more enraged at this as the footman delivered his message in public. In the evening Vitali wished to make me some apology, to which, however, I would not listen. 'To-morrow, sir,' said I to him, 'you will come at such an hour, and apologise to me in the house where I received the affront, and in the presence of the persons who were witnesses to it; or after to-morrow, whatever may be the consequence, either you or I will leave the house.' This firmness intimidated him. He came to the house at the hour appointed, and made me a public apology, with a meanness worthy of himself. But he afterwards took his measures

at leisure, and, at the same time that he cringed to me in public, he wrought so well after the Italian fashion that, although unable to prevail on the Ambassador to give me my dismission, he laid me under the necessity of resigning.

A wretch like him, certainly, could not know me, but he knew enough of my character to make it serviceable to his purposes. He knew I was mild to excess, and patient in bearing involuntary wrongs, but haughty and impatient when insulted with premeditated offences; loving decency and dignity in things in which these were requisite, and not more exact in requiring the respect due to myself than attentive in rendering that which I owed to others. In this he undertook to disgust me, and in this he succeeded. He turned the house upside down, and destroyed the order and subordination I had endeavoured to establish in it. A house without a woman stands in need of a rather severe discipline to preserve that modesty which is inseparable from dignity. He soon converted ours into a place of filthy debauch and scandalous licentiousness, the haunt of knaves and debauchees. He procured for second gentleman to his Excellency, in the place of him whom he had caused to be discharged, another pimp like himself, who kept a house of ill-fame at the Cross of Malta; and the indecency of these two well-matched rascals was equalled by nothing but their insolence. Except the bed-chamber of the Ambassador — which, however, was not in very good order — there was not a corner in the whole house supportable to a well-mannered man.

As his Excellency did not sup, the gentlemen and myself had a private table, at which the Abbé de Binis and the pages also ate. In the most paltry tavern people are served with more cleanliness and decency, have cleaner linen, and a table better supplied. We had but one little

and filthy candle, pewter plates, and iron forks. I could have overlooked what passed in secret, but I was deprived of my gondola. I was the only secretary to an Ambassador who was obliged to hire one or go on foot, and the livery of his Excellency no longer accompanied me, except when I went to the Senate. Besides, everything which passed in the house was known in the city. All those who were in the service of the Ambassador loudly exclaimed. Dominico, the sole cause of all, exclaimed louder than anybody, well knowing that the indecency with which we were treated was more affecting to me than to any other person. Though I was the only one in the house who said nothing of the matter abroad, I complained loudly of it to the Ambassador, as well as of himself, who, secretly excited by the wretch who was always at his ear, daily made me suffer some new affront. Obliged to spend a good deal to keep on a footing with those in the same situation with myself, and to make an appearance proper to my employment, I could not touch a sou of my salary, and when I asked him for money he spoke of his esteem for me, and his confidence, as if either of these could have filled my purse and provided for everything.

These two bandits at length quite turned the head of their master, who naturally had not a good one, and ruined him by a continual traffic and by cunning bargains, of which he was the dupe, whilst they persuaded him that he was the winner. They induced him to take upon the Brenta a palazzo, at twice the rent it was worth, and divided the surplus with the proprietor. The apartments were inlaid with mosaic, and ornamented with fine marble columns and pilasters, in the taste of the country. Monsieur de Montaigu had all these superbly masked by fir wainscoting, only because in Paris apartments were thus fitted up. It was for a similar reason that he only, of all the Ambassadors who were at Venice, took from his

pages their swords, and from his footmen their canes. Such was the man who, perhaps from the same motive, took a dislike to me on account of my serving him faithfully.

I patiently endured his disdain, his brutality, and ill-treatment, as long as, perceiving them accompanied by ill-humour, I thought they had in them no portion of hatred; but the moment I saw the design formed of depriving me of the honour I merited by my faithful services, I resolved to resign my employment. The first mark of his ill-will that I received was relative to a dinner he was to give to the Duke of Modena and his family, who were at Venice, and at which he signified to me I should not be present. I answered, piqued, but not angry, that having the honour daily to dine at his table, if the Duke of Modena, when he came, required that I should not appear at it, my duty, as well as the dignity of his Excellency, would not suffer me to consent to such a request. 'How!' said he passionately, 'my secretary, who is not a gentleman, pretends to dine with a Sovereign when my gentlemen do not!' 'Yes, sir,' replied I; 'the post with which your Excellency has honoured me, as long as I discharge its functions, so far ennobles me that my rank is superior to that of your gentlemen, or of the persons calling themselves such; and I am admitted where they cannot appear. You cannot but know that on the day on which you shall make your public entry, I am required by etiquette, and by an immemorial custom, to follow you in a dress of ceremony, and afterwards to dine with you at the Palace of Saint Mark; and I know not why a man who may — and indeed must — eat in public with the Doge and the Senate of Venice should not eat in private with the Duke of Modena.' Though this argument was unanswerable, it did not satisfy the Ambassador; but we had no occasion to renew the dis-

pute, as the Duke of Modena did not come to dine with him.

From that moment he did everything in his power to make things disagreeable to me, and endeavoured unjustly to deprive me of my rights by taking from me the little prerogatives annexed to my employment, to give them to his dear Vitali; and I am convinced that, had he dared to send him to the Senate in my place, he would have done it. He usually employed the Abbé de Binis in his closet, to write his private letters; he made use of him to write to Monsieur de Maurepas an account of the affair of Captain Olivet, in which, far from taking the least notice of me, the only person who gave himself any concern about the matter, he deprived me of the honour of the depositions, of which he sent him a duplicate, for the purpose of attributing them to Patizel, who had not opened his mouth. He wished to mortify me, and please his favourite, but had no desire to dismiss me. He perceived it would be more difficult to find a successor to me than to Monsieur Follau, who had already made him known to the world. A secretary who had a knowledge of Italian was absolutely necessary to him, on account of the answers from the Senate; one who could write all his despatches, and conduct his affairs, without his giving himself the least trouble about anything; a person who, to the merit of serving him well, could join the baseness of being the humble servant of his empty-headed gentlemen. He wished to retain and humble me, by keeping me far from my country and his own, without money to return, and in this he would, perhaps, have succeeded had he begun with more moderation; but Vitali, who had other views, and wished to force me to extremities, carried his point. The moment I perceived that I was losing all my trouble; that the Ambassador imputed to me my services as so many crimes, instead

of being satisfied with them; that with him I had nothing to expect but things disagreeable at home, and injustice abroad; and that, in the general disesteem into which he had fallen, his ill offices might be prejudicial to me, without the possibility of my being served by his good ones, I took my resolution, and asked him for my dismission, leaving him sufficient time to provide himself with another secretary. Without answering yes or no, he continued to treat me in the same manner, as if nothing had been said. Perceiving things to remain in the same state, and that he took no measure to procure himself a new secretary, I wrote to his brother, and, explaining to him my motives, begged he would obtain my dismission from his Excellency, adding that whether I received it or not, I could not possibly remain with him. I waited a long time without any answer, and began to be embarrassed; but at length the Ambassador received a letter from his brother, which must have been couched in very plain terms; for, although he was extremely subject to ferocious rage, I never saw him so violent as on this occasion. After torrents of abominable reproaches, not knowing what more to say, he accused me of having sold his ciphers. I burst into loud laughter, and asked him, in a sneering manner, if he thought there was in Venice a man who would be fool enough to give a crown for them all. This answer caused him to foam with rage. He threatened to call his servants to throw me out of the window. Until then I had been very composed; but, on this threat, anger and indignation seized me in my turn. I sprang to the door, and after having turned a button which fastened it within, 'No, Monsieur le Comte,' said I, returning to him with a grave step, 'your servants shall have nothing to do with this affair; please to let it be settled between ourselves.' My action and manner instantly made him calm; fear and surprise were marked

in his countenance. When I saw his fury abated, I bade him adieu in a very few words, and without waiting for his answer, went to the door, opened it, and passed slowly across the antechamber, through the midst of his people; who rose according to custom, and who, I am of opinion, would rather have lent their assistance against him than against me. Without going back to my apartment, I descended the stairs, and immediately went out of the palace, never more to enter it.

I hastened immediately to Monsieur Le Blond, and related to him what had happened. Knowing the man, he was but little surprised. He kept me to dinner. This dinner, although without preparation, was splendid. All the French of consequence who were at Venice partook of it. The Ambassador had not a single person. The consul related my case to the company. The cry was general, and by no means in favour of his Excellency. He had not settled my account, nor paid me a sou, and being reduced to the few louis I had in my pocket, I was extremely embarrassed about my return to France. Every purse was opened to me. I took twenty sequins from that of Monsieur Le Blond, and as many from that of Monsieur de Saint-Cyr, with whom, next to Monsieur Le Blond, I was the most intimately connected. I returned thanks to the rest; and, till my departure, went to lodge at the house of the chancellor of the consulate, to prove to the public that the nation was not an accomplice in the injustice of the Ambassador. He, furious at seeing me caressed in my misfortune, at the same time that, notwithstanding his being an Ambassador, nobody went near his house, quite lost his senses and behaved like a madman. He forgot himself so far as to present a memoir to the Senate to get me arrested. On being informed of this by the Abbé de Binis, I resolved to remain a fortnight longer, instead of setting off in a couple of days as

I had intended. My conduct had been known and approved of by everybody. I was universally esteemed. The Signiory did not deign to return an answer to the extravagant memoir of the Ambassador, but sent me word by the consul that I might remain in Venice as long as I thought proper, without making myself uneasy about the doings of a madman. I continued to see my friends. I went to take leave of the Ambassador from Spain, who received me well, and of the Comte de Finochietti, minister from Naples, whom I did not find at home. I wrote him a letter, and received the most polite and obliging answer. And at length I took my departure, leaving behind me, notwithstanding my embarrassment, no other debts than the two sums I had borrowed, and of which I have just spoken; and an account of fifty crowns with a shopkeeper, of the name of Morandi, which Carrio promised to pay, and which I have never reimbursed him, although we have frequently met since that time; but with respect to the two loans, I returned them very exactly the moment I had it in my power.

I cannot take leave of Venice without saying something of the celebrated amusements of that city, or at least of the small part of them of which I partook during my residence there. It has been seen how little in my youth I ran after the pleasures of that age, or at least those that are so called. My inclinations did not change at Venice, but my occupations, which moreover would have prevented this, rendered more agreeable the simple recreations I permitted myself. The first and most pleasing of all was the society of men of merit. Messieurs Le Blond, Saint-Cyr, Carrio, Altuna, and a Forlanian [1] gentleman, whose name I am very sorry to have forgotten, and whom I never call to my recollection without emotion: he was the man of all I ever knew whose

[1] A native of Friuli.

heart most resembled my own. We were connected with two or three Englishmen of great wit and information, and, like ourselves, passionately fond of music. All these gentlemen had their wives, female friends, or mistresses: the latter were most of them women of talent, at whose apartments there were balls and concerts. There was but little play; a lively turn, talents, and the theatres rendered that amusement insipid. Play is the resource of none but men whose time hangs heavy on their hands. I had brought with me from Paris the prejudice of that city against Italian music; but I had also received from nature a sensibility and niceness of distinction which prejudice cannot withstand. I soon contracted that passion for Italian music with which it inspires all those who are capable of feeling its excellence. In listening to *barcarolles*, I found I had not yet known what singing was, and I soon became so fond of the opera that, tired of babbling, eating, and gaming in the boxes, when I wished to listen I frequently withdrew from the company to another part of the theatre. There, quite alone, shut up in my box, I abandoned myself, notwithstanding the length of the representation, to the pleasure of enjoying it at ease to the conclusion. One evening, at the Theatre of Saint Chrysostom, I fell into a more profound sleep than if I had been in my bed. The loud and brilliant airs did not disturb my repose. But who can explain the delicious sensations given me by the soft harmony of the angelic music by which I was charmed from sleep? What an awakening! what ravishment! what ecstasy, when at the same instant I opened my ears and eyes! My first idea was to believe I was in paradise. The ravishing air, which I still recollect and shall never forget, began with these words —

'Conservami la bella
Che si m'accende il cor.'

I was desirous of having it; I had and kept it for a time; but it was not the same thing upon paper as in my head. The notes were the same, but the thing was different. This divine composition can never be executed but in my mind in the same manner as it was on the evening when it awoke me from sleep.

A kind of music far superior, in my opinion, to that of operas, and which in all Italy has not its equal, nor perhaps in the whole world, is that of the *scuole*. The *scuole* are houses of charity, established for the education of young girls without fortune, to whom the Republic afterwards gives a portion either in marriage or for the cloister. Amongst talents cultivated in these young girls, music is in the first rank. Every Sunday at the church of each of the four *scuole*, during vespers, motets or anthems, with full choruses, accompanied by a great orchestra, and composed and directed by the best masters in Italy, are sung in the galleries by girls only, not one of whom is more than twenty years of age. I have not an idea of anything so voluptuous and affecting as this music: the richness of the art, the exquisite taste of the vocal parts, the excellence of the voices, the justness of the execution, everything in these delightful concerts concurs to produce an impression which certainly is not in exact accordance with the taste of the day, but from which I am of opinion no heart is secure. Carrio and I never failed being present at these vespers of the *Mendicanti*, and we were not alone. The church was always full of lovers of the art, and even the actors of the Opera came there to form their tastes after these excellent models. What vexed me was the accursed iron grate, which suffered nothing to escape but sounds, and concealed from me the angels of which they were worthy. I talked of nothing else. One day I spoke of it at Monsieur Le Blond's. 'If you are so desirous,' said he, 'to

see those little girls, it will be an easy matter to satisfy your wishes. I am one of the administrators of the house, I will give you a collation with them.' I did not let him rest until he had fulfilled his promise. In entering the saloon which contained those beauties I so much longed to see, I felt a trembling of love which I had never before experienced. Monsieur Le Blond presented to me, one after the other, these celebrated female singers, of whom the names and voices were all with which I was acquainted. 'Come, Sophia': she was horrid. 'Come, Cattina': she had but one eye. 'Come, Bettina': the smallpox had entirely disfigured her. Scarcely one of them was without some striking defect. He laughed cruelly at my surprise; however, two or three of them appeared tolerable; these never sang but in the choruses; I was almost in despair. During the collation, we endeavoured to attract their attention, and they soon became enlivened; ugliness does not exclude the graces, which I found they possessed. I said to myself, 'They cannot sing in this manner without intelligence and sensibility, they must have both'; in fine, my manner of seeing them changed to such a degree that I left the house almost in love with each of these ugly faces. I had had scarcely courage enough to return to their vespers; I had now gained reassurance. I still found their singing delightful; and their voices so much embellished their persons, that whilst they sang, in spite of my eyes, I obdurately continued to think them beautiful.

Music in Italy is accompanied with so trifling an expense that it is not worth while for such as have a taste for it to deny themselves the pleasure it affords. I hired a harpsichord, and for half a crown I had at my apartment four or five symphonists, with whom I practised once a week in executing such airs as had given me most pleasure at the Opera. I also had some symphonies per-

formed from my *Muses Galantes*. Whether these pleased the performers, or the ballet-master of Saint John Chrysostom wished to flatter me, he desired to have two of them, and I afterwards had the pleasure of hearing these executed by that admirable orchestra. They were danced too by little Bettina, a pretty and amiable girl, who lived under the protection of a Spaniard, Monsieur Fagoaga, a friend of ours, with whom we often went to spend the evening.

But, now that I refer to girls of easy virtue, it is not in Venice that a man abstains from them. 'Have you nothing to confess,' somebody will ask me, 'upon this subject?' Yes; I have something to say upon it, and I will proceed to this confession with the same ingenuousness with which I have made all my former ones.

I have always had a distaste for harlots, but at Venice those were all I had within my reach, most of the houses being shut against me on account of my place. The daughters of Monsieur Le Blond were very amiable, but difficult of access; and I had too much respect for the father and mother to entertain a dishonourable thought respecting them.

I should have had a much stronger liking for a young lady named Mademoiselle de Catanéo, daughter to the agent of the King of Prussia; but Carrio was in love with her — there was even between them some question of marriage. He was in easy circumstances, and I had no fortune: his salary was a hundred louis a year, mine amounted to no more than a hundred pistoles, and, besides my being unwilling to gain by a friend's defeat, I knew that in all places, and especially at Venice, with a purse so ill furnished as mine, gallantry was out of the question. I had not lost the pernicious custom of deceiving my wants. Too busily employed forcibly to feel those proceeding from the climate, I lived upwards of a

year in that city as chastely as I had done in Paris; and at the end of eighteen months, I quitted it without having approached the sex, except twice, on the singular occasions of which I am going to speak.

The first was procured me by that honest gentleman Vitali, some time after the formal apology that I obliged him to make me. The conversation at the table turned on the amusements of Venice. The gentlemen reproached me with my indifference with regard to the most delightful of them all, at the same time extolling the grace and elegance of Venetian courtesans, and adding that they were superior to all others in any part of the world. Domenico said I must make an acquaintance with the most amiable of them all; he offered to take me to her apartments, and assured me that I should be pleased. I laughed at this obliging offer; and Comte Peati, a man in years, and venerable, observed to me, with more candour than I should have expected from an Italian, that he thought me too prudent to suffer myself to be led amongst loose women by my enemy. In fact, I had neither intention nor temptation; but, notwithstanding this, by an inconsistency which I cannot myself comprehend, I was at length prevailed upon to go, contrary to my inclination, the sentiment of my heart, my reason, and even my will — solely from weakness, and being ashamed to show mistrust, and besides, as the expression of the country is, *per non parer troppo coglione.* The *padoana* whom we went to visit was pretty, she was even beautiful, but her beauty was not of that kind which pleased me. Domenico left me with her. I sent for *sorbetti* and asked her to sing. In about half an hour I wished to take my leave, after having put a ducat on the table, but this, by a singular scruple, she refused until she had deserved it, and I, from as singular a folly, consented to remove her scruple. I returned to the palace so

fully persuaded that I should feel the consequence of this step that the first thing I did was to send for the surgeon to ask him for medicinal draughts. Nothing can equal the uneasiness of mind I suffered for three weeks, without its being justified by any real inconvenience or apparent sign. I could not believe it was possible to quit with impunity the embraces of the *padoana*. The surgeon himself had the greatest difficulty in removing my apprehensions; nor could he do this by any other means than by persuading me that I was formed in such a manner as not to be easily infected; and, although I have perhaps exposed myself less to such experiences than most other men, my health in that respect having never suffered the least inconvenience is, in my opinion, a proof that the surgeon was right. However, this has never made me imprudent, and if in fact I have received such an advantage from nature, I can safely assert that I have never abused it.

My second adventure, although likewise with a girl of the town, was of a nature very different, as well in its origin as in its effects. I have already said that Captain Olivet gave me a dinner on board his vessel, and that I took with me the secretary of the Spanish embassy. I expected a salute of cannon. The ship's company were drawn up to receive us, but not so much as a priming was burned, at which I was mortified on account of Carrio, whom I perceived to be rather piqued at the neglect. A salute of cannon was given on board merchant-ships to people of less consequence than we were; besides, I thought that I had deserved some distinguishing mark of respect from the captain. I could not conceal my thoughts, because this is at all times impossible to me, and although the dinner was a very good one, and Olivet did the honours of it perfectly well, I began it in an ill-humour, eating but little and speaking still less.

At the first health I at least expected a volley. Nothing! Carrio, who had read what was passing within me, laughed at seeing me sulk like a child. Before dinner was half over, I saw a gondola approach the vessel. 'Bless me, sir!' said the captain, 'take care of yourself; the enemy approaches.' I asked him what he meant, and he answered jocosely. The gondola made the ship's side, and I observed a fine young damsel come on board, very coquettishly dressed and agile, who at three steps was in the cabin, and seated by my side, before I had time to perceive that a cover was laid for her. She was equally charming and lively, a brunette, not more than twenty years of age. She spoke nothing but Italian, and her accent alone was sufficient to turn my head. As she ate and chatted, she cast her eyes upon me, steadfastly looked at me a moment, and then exclaimed, 'Good Virgin! ah, my dear Brémond, what an age it is since I saw thee!' She then threw herself into my arms, sealed her lips to mine, and pressed me almost to suffocation. Her large black eyes, like those of the beauties of the East, darted fiery shafts into my heart; and although the surprise at first distracted my ideas, voluptuousness made a rapid progress, and this to such a degree that the beautiful seducer herself was, notwithstanding the spectators, obliged to restrain my ardour, for I was intoxicated, or rather furious. When she perceived that she had made the impression she desired, she became more modest in her caresses, but not in her vivacity; and when she thought proper to explain to us the real — or false — cause of all her petulance, she said I resembled Monsieur de Brémond, director of the customs of Tuscany, to such a degree as to be mistaken for him; that she had madly loved this Monsieur de Brémond, and loved him still; that she had quitted him because she was a fool; that she took me in his place; that she would love me because

it pleased her so to do, for which reason I must love her as long as it was agreeable to her, and when she thought it proper to send me about my business, I must be as patient as her dear Brémond had been. What was said was done. She took possession of me as of a man who belonged to her; she gave me her gloves to keep, her fan, her *cinda*, and her coif, and ordered me to go here or there, to do this or that, and I obeyed. She told me to go and send away her gondola, because she chose to make use of mine, and I immediately sent it away; she bid me move from my place, and beg Carrio to sit down in it, because she had something to say to him, and I did as she desired. They chatted a good while together, but spoke low, and I did not interrupt them. She called me, and I approached her: 'Hark ye, Zanetto,' she said to me, 'I will not be loved in the French manner; this, indeed, will not be well. In the first moment of lassitude, get thee gone; but be wholly mine or not at all, I caution thee.' After dinner we went to see the glass manufactory at Murano. She bought a great number of little curiosities, for which she left us to pay without the least ceremony. But she everywhere bestowed gratuities to a much greater amount than the things we had purchased were worth. By the indifference with which she threw away her money, and suffered us to squander ours, I perceived that she annexed to it but little value. When she insisted upon a payment, I am of opinion it was rather from vanity than avarice. She was flattered by the price her admirers set upon her favours.

In the evening we conducted her to her apartments. As we conversed together, I perceived a couple of pistols upon her toilette. 'Ah! ah!' said I, taking one of them up, 'this is a patch-box of a new construction: may I ask what is its use? I know you have other arms which give more fire than those upon your table.' After a few pleas-

antries of the same kind, she said to us, with an ingenuous pride which rendered her still more charming, 'When I am complaisant to persons whom I do not love, I make them pay for the weariness they cause me; nothing can be more just; but if I suffer their caresses I will not bear their insults, nor miss the first who shall be wanting to me in respect.'

At taking leave of her I made another appointment for the next day. I did not make her wait. I found her *in vestito di confidenza*, in an undress more than wanton, unknown to northern countries, and which I will not amuse myself in describing, although I recollect it but too well. I shall only remark that her ruffles and collar were edged with silk network ornamented with rose-coloured pompons. This, to my eyes, much enlivened a beautiful complexion. I afterwards found it to be the mode in Venice, and the effect is so charming that I am surprised it has never been introduced in France. I had no idea of the delights which awaited me. I have spoken of Madame de Larnage with the transport which the remembrance of her still sometimes gives me; but how old, ugly, and cold she appeared compared with my Zulietta! Do not attempt to form to yourself an idea of the charms and graces of this enchanting girl; you will be far too short of truth. Young virgins in cloisters are not so fresh; the beauties of the seraglio are less animated; the houris of paradise are less engaging. Never was so sweet an enjoyment offered to the heart and senses of a mortal. Ah! had I at least been capable of fully tasting of it for a single moment! — I tasted of it, but without a charm. I enfeebled all its delights. I destroyed them at will. No; nature has not made me capable of enjoyment. She has infused into my wretched head the poison of that ineffable happiness, the desire for which she first placed in my heart.

If there be a circumstance in my life which describes my nature, it is that which I am going to relate. The forcible manner in which I at this moment recollect the object of my book will here make me hold in contempt the false delicacy which would prevent me from fulfilling it. Whoever you may be who are desirous of knowing a man, have the courage to read the two or three following pages, and you will become fully acquainted with Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

I entered the chamber of a courtesan, as the sanctuary of love and beauty, and in her person I thought I saw divinity. I should have been inclined to think that without respect and esteem it was impossible to feel anything like that which she made me experience. Scarcely had I, in her first familiarities, discovered the force and charms of her caresses, before I wished, for fear of losing the fruit of them, to gather it beforehand. Suddenly, instead of the flame which consumed me, I feel a mortal cold run through all my veins; my limbs fail me; and, ready to faint away, I sit down and weep like a child.

Who would guess the cause of my tears, and what at this moment passed within me? I said to myself: The object at my disposal is the masterpiece of nature and of love; her wit and person equally approach perfection; she is as good and generous as she is amiable and beautiful; nobles and princes should be her slaves; sceptres should fall at her feet. Yet, see — she is a miserable prostitute, abandoned to the public. The captain of a merchantship disposes of her at will; she throws herself into my arms, although she knows I have nothing; and my merit, with which she cannot be acquainted, can be to her no inducement. In this there is something inconceivable. Either my heart deceives me, fascinates my senses, and makes me the dupe of an unworthy slut, or some secret defect, of which I am ignorant, destroys the effect of her

charms, and renders her odious in the eyes of those who would otherwise contend for her favours. I endeavoured, by an extraordinary effort of mind, to discover this defect, but it did not so much as strike me that it might be any disorder connected with her mode of life. The clearness of her skin, the brilliancy of her complexion, her white teeth, sweet breath, and the appearance of neatness about her person, so far removed from me this idea, that, still in doubt relative to my own situation after the affair of the *padoana*, I rather apprehended that I was not sufficiently in health for her, and I am firmly persuaded I was not deceived in my opinion.

These very well-timed reflections agitated me to such a degree that I shed tears. Zulietta, to whom the scene must have been quite novel, was struck speechless for a moment; but having made a turn in her chamber, and, passing before her glass, she comprehended, and my eyes confirmed her opinion, that disgust had no part in this erratic conduct; it was not difficult for her to recover me and dispel this awkward shyness. But, at the moment in which I was ready to faint upon a bosom which seemed to suffer for the first time the impression of the hand and lips of a man, I observed that she had a *téton borgne*.[1] I struck my forehead; I examined, and thought I perceived that this *téton* was not formed like the other. I immediately began to consider how it was possible to have such a defect, and, persuaded of its proceeding from some great natural vice, I revolved the matter in my brain till I was clearly convinced that, instead of the most charming person of whom I could form an idea, I had in my arms a species of monster, the outcast of nature, of men, and of love. I carried my stupidity so far as to speak to her of this *téton borgne*. She at first took what I said jocosely; and in her frolicsome humour did and

[1] Téton qui n'a pas de mamelon. — *Littré*.

said things which made me die of love. But, perceiving an inquietude that I could not conceal, she at length reddened, adjusted her dress, arose, and, without saying a word, went and placed herself at the window. I attempted to place myself by her side; she withdrew to a sofa, rose from it the next moment, and, fanning herself as she walked about the chamber, said to me, in a cold and disdainful tone of voice: 'Zanetto, lascia le donne, e studia la matematica.'

Before I took leave, I requested her to appoint another rendezvous for the next day, which she postponed for three days, adding, with a satirical smile, that I must needs be in want of repose. I was very ill at ease during the interval; my heart was full of her charms and graces. I felt my extravagance, and reproached myself with it, regretting the loss of the moments I had so ill employed, and which, had I chosen, I might have rendered more agreeable than any in my whole life: I awaited with the most burning impatience the moment in which I might repair the loss, and yet, notwithstanding all that had passed, was anxious to reconcile the perfections of this adorable girl with the indignity of her situation. I ran, I flew to her apartment at the hour appointed. I know not whether or not her ardour would have been more satisfied with this visit; her pride at least would have been flattered by it, and I already rejoiced at the idea of my convincing her, in every respect, that I knew how to repair the wrongs I had done. She spared me this experience. The gondolier whom I had sent to her apartment brought me for answer that she had set off, the evening before, for Florence. If I had not felt all the love I had for her person when this was in my possession, I felt it in the most cruel manner on losing her. Amiable and charming as she was in my eyes, I could have consoled myself for the loss of her; but this I have

never been able to do relative to the contemptuous remembrance of me which she must have borne away with her.

These are my two narratives. The eighteen months I passed at Venice furnished me with no other of the same kind, except a simple prospect at most. Carrio was a gallant. Tired of visiting girls engaged to others, he took a fancy to have one to himself, and, as we were inseparable, he proposed to me an arrangement, common enough at Venice, which was to keep one girl for us both. To this I consented. The question was, to find one who was safe. He was so industrious in his researches that he found out a little girl of from eleven to twelve years of age, whom her infamous mother was attempting to sell, and we went together to see her. The sight of the child moved me to the most lively compassion. She was fair, and as gentle as a lamb. Nobody would have taken her for an Italian. Living is very cheap in Venice; we gave a little money to the mother, and provided for the subsistence of her daughter. She had a voice, and to procure her some resource we gave her a spinet, and a singing-master. All this did not cost each of us more than two sequins a month, and spared us much greater expense in other ways; but as we were obliged to wait until she became of a riper age, this was sowing a long time before we could possibly reap. However, satisfied with passing our evenings chatting and innocently playing with the child, we perhaps enjoyed greater pleasure than if we had received the last favours. So true is it that men are more attached to women by a certain pleasure they have in living with them, than by any kind of libertinism. My heart became insensibly attached to the little Anzoletta, but my attachment was paternal, in which the senses had so little share that in proportion as the former increased, to have connected it with the latter would have

been less possible; and I felt I should have experienced, on approaching this little creature when become nubile, the same horror with which the abominable crime of incest would have inspired me. I perceived that the sentiments of Carrio took, unknown to himself, exactly the same turn. We thus prepared for ourselves, without intending it, pleasure not less delicious, but very different from that of which we first had an idea; and I am fully persuaded that, however beautiful the poor child might have become, far from being the corrupters of her innocence, we should have been the protectors of it. The catastrophe which shortly afterwards overtook me deprived me of the happiness of taking a part in this good work, and my only merit in the affair was the inclination of my heart. I will now return to my journey.

My first intention after leaving Monsieur de Montaigu was to retire to Geneva, until time and more favourable circumstances should have removed the obstacles which prevented my union with my poor Mamma; but the quarrel between me and Monsieur de Montaigu having become public, and he having had the folly to write about it to the Court, I resolved to go there to give an account of my conduct, and complain of that of a madman. I communicated my intention, from Venice, to Monsieur du Theil, charged *per interim* with foreign affairs after the death of Monsieur Amelot. I set off as soon as my letter, and took my route through Bergamo, Como, and Domo d'Ossola, and crossing the Simplon. At Sion, Monsieur de Chaignon, French political agent, showed me great civility; at Geneva Monsieur de La Closure treated me likewise. I there renewed my acquaintance with Monsieur de Gauffecourt, from whom I had some money to receive. I had passed through Nyon without going to see my father, not, indeed, without much regret; but I was unwilling to appear before my step-

mother after the disaster which had befallen me, certain of being condemned by her without a hearing. The bookseller Duvillard, an old friend of my father, reproached me severely with this neglect. I gave him my reasons for it, and, to repair my fault, without exposing myself to meet my stepmother, I took a chaise and we went together to Nyon and stopped at an inn. Duvillard went to fetch my father, who came running to embrace me. We supped together, and after passing an evening very agreeable to the wishes of my heart, I returned the next morning to Geneva with Duvillard, for whom I have ever since retained a sentiment of gratitude in return for the service he rendered me on this occasion.

Lyons was a little out of my direct road, but I was determined to pass through that city in order to convince myself of a knavish trick played me by Monsieur de Montaigu. I had directed to be sent me from Paris a little box containing a waistcoat embroidered with gold, a few pairs of ruffles, and six pairs of white silk stockings; nothing more. Upon a proposal made by himself, I ordered this case — or rather this small box — to be added to his baggage. In the apothecary's bill he offered me in payment of my salary, and which he wrote out himself, he stated the weight of this box, which he called a bale, at eleven quintaux, and charged me with the carriage of it at an enormous rate. By the inquiry of Monsieur Boy de La Tour, to whom I was recommended by Monsieur Roguin, his uncle, it was proved from the registers of the customs of Lyons and Marseilles that the said bale weighed no more than forty-five livres, and had paid carriage according to that weight. I joined this authentic extract to the memoir of Monsieur de Montaigu, and provided with these papers, and others containing stronger facts, I returned to Paris, impatient to make use

of them. During the whole of this long journey I had little adventures, at Como, in Valais, and elsewhere. I also saw many curious things, amongst others the Borromean Islands, which are worthy of description. But I am pressed by time, and surrounded by spies. I am obliged to write in haste, and very imperfectly, a work which requires the leisure and tranquillity I do not enjoy. If ever Providence in its goodness grants me calmer days, I shall destine them to new-modelling this work, should I be able, or at least to giving it a supplement, of which I perceive it stands in great need.[1]

The news of my affair had reached Paris before me, and on my arrival I found the people in all the public offices, and society in general, scandalised at the follies of the Ambassador. Notwithstanding this, the public talk of Venice, and the unanswerable proofs that I exhibited, I could not obtain any sort of justice. Far from getting satisfaction or reparation, I was left at the discretion of the Ambassador even for my salary, and this for no other reason than because, not being a Frenchman, I had no right to national protection, and that it was a private affair between him and myself. Everybody agreed I was insulted, wronged, and unfortunate; that the Ambassador was senseless, cruel, and iniquitous, and that altogether this affair dishonoured him for ever. But what of this? He was the Ambassador, and I was nothing more than the secretary. Order, or that which is so called, was in opposition to my obtaining justice, and I obtained none. I supposed that, by loudly complaining, and by publicly treating this madman in the manner he deserved, I should at length be told to hold my tongue; this was what I wished for, and I was fully determined not to obey until judgment had been pronounced. But at that time there was no Minister of Foreign Affairs. I

[1] I have renounced this intention. — R.

was suffered to exclaim — nay, even encouraged to do it, and joined with — but the business still remained stationary, until, tired of being in the right without obtaining justice, my courage at length failed me, and I let the whole matter drop.

The only person by whom I was ill received, and from whom I should least have expected such an injustice, was Madame de Beuzenval. Full of the prerogatives of rank and nobility, she could not conceive it possible that an ambassador could ever be in the wrong with respect to his secretary. The reception she gave me was conformable to this prejudice. I was so piqued at it that, immediately after leaving her, I wrote her perhaps one of the strongest and most spirited letters that ever came from my pen, and since that time I never once returned to her house. I was better received by Père Castel; but, in the midst of his jesuitical wheedling, I perceived him faithfully to follow one of the great maxims of his society, which is always to sacrifice the weaker to the stronger. The conviction I felt of the justice of my cause, and my natural pride, did not suffer me patiently to endure this partiality. I ceased visiting Père Castel, and, on that account, going to the college of the Jesuits, where I knew nobody but himself. Besides, the intriguing and tyrannical spirit of his brethren, so different from the cordiality of good Père Hemet, gave me such a dislike for their conversation that I have never since been acquainted with nor seen any one of them, except Père Bertier, whom I saw twice or thrice at Monsieur Dupin's, in conjunction with whom he laboured with all his might at the refutation of Montesquieu.

That I may not return to the subject, I will conclude what I have to say of Monsieur de Montaigu. I had told him in our quarrels that a secretary was not what he wanted, but an attorney's clerk. He took the hint,

and the person whom he procured to succeed me was a real attorney, who, in less than a year, robbed him of twenty or thirty thousand livres. He discharged him, and sent him to prison, dismissed his gentlemen with disgrace and scandal, got himself everywhere into quarrels, received affronts which a footman would not have put up with, and, after numerous follies, was recalled and banished to his province. It is very probable that, among the reprimands he received at court, his affair with me was not forgotten. At least, a little time after his return he sent his maître d'hôtel to settle my account, and give me some money. I was in want of it at that moment. My debts at Venice — debts of honour if ever there were any — lay heavy upon my mind. I made use of the means which offered to discharge these, as well as the note of Zanetto Nani. I received what was offered me, paid all my debts, and remained as before, without a sou, but relieved from a weight which had become insupportable. From that time I never heard a word of Monsieur de Montaigu, until his death, which became known to me in the news of the day. The peace of God be with that poor man! He was as fit for the functions of an ambassador as in my infancy I had been for those of *grapignan*. However, it was in his power to have honourably supported himself by my services, and rapidly to have advanced me in a career for which the Comte de Gouvon had destined me in my youth, and to execute which I had in a more advanced age rendered myself capable.

The justice and inutility of my complaints left in my mind seeds of indignation against our foolish civil institutions, by which the true welfare of the public and pure justice are always sacrificed to I know not what appearance of order, in reality destructive of order, which does nothing more than add the sanction of public au-

thority to the oppression of the weak and the iniquity of the powerful. Two things prevented these seeds from germinating at that time, as they afterwards did: one was, myself being in question in the affair; and private interest, whence nothing great or noble ever proceeded, could not draw from my heart the divine impulses which only the most pure love of that which is just and sublime can produce. The other was the charm of friendship, which tempered and calmed my wrath by the ascendency of a more pleasing sentiment. I had become acquainted at Venice with a Biscayan, a friend of my friend Carrio, and worthy of being that of every honest man. This amiable young man, born with every talent and virtue, had just made the tour of Italy to gain a taste for the fine arts, and, imagining he had nothing more to acquire, intended to return by the most direct road to his own country. I told him the arts were nothing more than a relaxation to a genius like his, fit to cultivate the sciences; and, to give himself a taste for these, I advised him to make a journey to Paris and reside there for six months. He took my advice, and went to Paris. He was there, and expected me when I arrived. His lodging was too considerable for him, and he offered me half of it, which I instantly accepted. I found him absorbed in the study of the sublimest sciences. Nothing was above his reach. He digested everything with a prodigious rapidity. How cordially did he thank me for having procured him this food for his mind, which was tormented by a thirst after knowledge, without his being aware of it! What a treasure of light and virtue I found in this vigorous mind! I felt he was the friend I wanted. We soon became intimate. Our tastes were not the same, and we constantly disputed. Both opinionated, we never could agree about anything. Nevertheless we could not separate; and notwithstanding our incessant contradictions, we

neither of us wished the other to be different from what he was.

Ignacio Emmanuel de Altuna was one of those rare beings whom only Spain produces, and of whom she produces too few for her glory. He had not the violent national passions common in his own country. The idea of vengeance could no more enter his head than the desire of it could proceed from his heart. His mind was too great to be vindictive, and I have frequently heard him say, with the greatest coolness, that no mortal could offend him. He was gallant, without being tender. He played with women as with so many pretty children. He amused himself with the mistresses of his friends, but I never knew him to have one of his own, nor the least desire for it. The pure flame of virtue that burned in his heart never suffered sensual fires to spring up there.

After his travels, he married, died young, and left children; and I am as well convinced as of my existence that his wife was the first and only woman with whom he tasted the pleasures of love. Externally he was devout like a Spaniard, but in his heart he had the piety of an angel. Except myself, he is the only man I ever saw whose principles were not intolerant. He never asked any person his opinion in matters of religion. It was of no consequence to him whether his friend was a Jew, a Protestant, a Turk, a bigot, or an Atheist, provided he was an honest man. Obstinate and headstrong in matters of indifference, the moment religion was in question, even the moral part, he collected himself, was silent, or simply said, 'I am charged with the care of myself only.' It is astonishing that so much elevation of mind should be compatible with a spirit of detail carried to minuteness. He divided the employment of the day in advance by hours, quarters, and minutes; and so scrupulously adhered to this distribution that had the clock struck while

he was reading a phrase, he would have shut his book without finishing it. His portions of time thus laid out were some of them set apart to studies of one kind, and others to those of another. He had some for reflection, conversation, divine service, the reading of Locke, for his rosary, for visits, music, and painting; and neither pleasure, nor temptation, nor complaisance could interrupt this order; a duty he might have had to discharge was the only thing that could have done it. When he gave me a list of his distribution, that I might conform myself thereto, I first laughed, and then shed tears of admiration. He never constrained anybody nor suffered constraint himself. He was rather rough with people who from politeness attempted to put it upon him. He was passionate without being sullen. I have often seen him angry, but never saw him fretful. Nothing could be more cheerful than his temper. He knew how to pass and receive a joke; indeed, raillery was one of his distinguished talents, and he could make a pointed epigram. When he was animated by opposition, he spoke noisily, and could be heard at a distance; but, whilst he loudly inveighed, a smile was spread over his countenance, and in the midst of his warmth he used some diverting expression which made all his hearers break out into a loud laugh. He had no more of the Spanish complexion than of the phlegm of that country. His skin was white, his cheeks finely coloured, and his hair of a light chestnut. He was tall and well made. His body was well formed for the residence of his soul.

This wise-hearted as well as wise-headed man knew mankind, and was my friend; this is my only answer to such as are not so. We were so intimately united that our intention was to pass our days together. In a few years I was to go to Ascoytia to live with him at his estate. Every part of the project was arranged between

us on the eve of his departure; nothing was left undetermined, except that which depends not upon men in the best concerted plans: posterior events, my disasters, his marriage, and finally his death, separated us for ever.

Some men would be tempted to say that nothing succeeds except the dark conspiracies of the wicked, and that the innocent intentions of the good are seldom, or never, accomplished.

I had felt the inconvenience of dependence, and took a resolution never again to expose myself to it. Having seen the projects of my ambition, which circumstances had induced me to form, overturned in their birth, discouraged in the career I had so well begun, from which, however, I had just been expelled, I resolved never more to attach myself to any person, but to remain in an independent state, turning my talents to the best advantage. Of these I at length began to feel the extent, having hitherto had too modest an opinion of them. I again took up my opera, which I had laid aside to go to Venice; and that I might be less interrupted after the departure of Altuna, I returned to my old Hôtel Saint-Quentin, which, in a solitary part of the town, not far from the Luxembourg, was more proper for quiet work than the noisy Rue Saint-Honoré. There, the only consolation which Heaven has suffered me to taste in my misery, and the only one which has rendered it supportable, awaited me. This was not a transient acquaintance. I must enter into some detail relative to the manner in which it was made.

We had a new landlady from Orléans; she took for a needlewoman a girl from her own country of between twenty-two and twenty-three years of age, and who, as well as the hostess, ate at our table. This girl, named Thérèse Le Vasseur, was of a good family; her father was an officer in the Mint of Orléans, and her mother a shop-

keeper; they had many children. The function of the Mint of Orléans being suppressed, the father found himself without employment, and the mother, having suffered losses, was reduced to narrow circumstances. She quitted her business and came to Paris with her husband and daughter, who, by her industry, maintained all three.

The first time I saw this girl at table I was struck with her modest demeanour, and still more with her lively yet charming look, which, with respect to the impression made upon me, was never equalled. Besides Monsieur de Bonnefond, the company was composed of several Irish priests, Gascons, and others of much the same description. Our hostess herself was not very well bred, and I was the only person at table who spoke and behaved with decency. Allurements were thrown out to the young girl. I took her part, and the joke was then turned against me. Had I had no natural inclination to the poor girl, compassion and contradiction would have produced it in me. I was always a great friend to decency in manners and conversation, especially towards the fair sex. I openly declared myself her champion, and perceived she was not insensible of my attention; her looks, animated by the gratitude she dared not express by words, were for this reason still more penetrating.

She was very timid, and I was as much so as herself. The connection which this disposition, common to both, seemed to repel was, however, rapidly formed. Our landlady, perceiving its progress, became furious; and her brutality forwarded my affair with the young girl, who, having no person in the house except myself to give her the least support, grieved to see me go from home, and sighed for the return of her protector. The affinity our hearts bore to each other, and the similarity of our dispositions, had soon their ordinary effect. She thought she saw in me an honest man, and in this she was not deceived.

I thought I perceived in her a girl of sensibility, simple in her manners, and devoid of coquetry. I was no more deceived in her than she in me. I began by declaring to her that I would never either abandon or marry her. Love, esteem, artless sincerity were the ministers of my triumph, and it was because her heart was tender and virtuous that I was happy without being presuming.

The apprehension she was under of my not finding in her that for which she supposed I sought, retarded my happiness more than every other circumstance. I perceived her disconcerted and confused before she yielded her consent, wishing to be understood, and not daring to explain herself. Far from suspecting the real cause of her embarrassment, I falsely imagined it to proceed from another motive, a supposition highly insulting to her morals, and thinking she wished me to understand that my health might be exposed to danger, I fell into so perplexed a state that, although it was no restraint upon me, it poisoned my happiness during several days. As we did not understand each other, our conversations upon this subject were so many enigmas more than ridiculous. She was upon the point of believing I was absolutely mad, and I, on my part, was as near not knowing what to think of her. At last we came to an explanation; she confessed to me with tears the only fault of her life, committed when she was hardly more than a child — the fruit of her ignorance and the art of her seducer. The moment I comprehended what she meant, I gave a shout of joy. 'Virginity!' exclaimed I, 'sought for at Paris, and at twenty years of age! Ah, my Thérèse! I am happy in possessing thee, well-behaved and healthy as thou art, and in not finding that for which I never sought.'

At first, amusement was my only object; I perceived I had gone further, and had given myself a companion. A little intimate connection with this excellent girl, and

a few reflections upon my situation, made me discover that, while thinking of nothing more than my pleasures, I had done a great deal towards my happiness. In the place of extinguished ambition, a lively sentiment, which should take entire possession of my heart, was necessary to me. In a word, I wanted a successor to Mamma. Since I was never again to live with her, it was necessary some person should live with her pupil, and a person, too, in whom I might find that simplicity and docility of mind and heart which she had found in me. It was necessary that the happiness of domestic life should indemnify me for the splendid career I had just renounced. When I was quite alone there was a void in my heart, which wanted nothing more than another heart to fill it up. Fate had deprived me of this, or, at least in part, alienated me from that for which by nature I was formed, From that moment I was alone, for there never was for me anything intermediate between everything and nothing. I found in Thérèse the supplement of which I stood in need; by means of her I lived as happily as I possibly could, according to the course of events.

I first attempted to improve her mind. In this my pains were useless. Her mind is as nature formed it; it is not susceptible of cultivation. I do not blush in acknowledging that she never knew how to read well, although she writes tolerably. When I went to lodge in the Rue Neuve-des-Petits-Champs, at the Hôtel de Pontchartrain, opposite to my windows, there was a dial, on which for a whole month I used all my efforts to teach her to tell the hours; yet she scarcely knows them at present. She never could enumerate the twelve months of the year in order, and cannot distinguish one numeral from another, notwithstanding all the trouble I took, in endeavouring to teach them to her. She neither knows how to count money, nor to reckon the price of anything.

The word which presents itself to her mind when speaking is frequently the opposite to that of which she means to make use. I formerly made a dictionary of her phrases, to amuse Madame de Luxembourg, and her quid-pro-quos became celebrated among those with whom I was intimate. But this person, so limited in her intellect, and, if the world pleases, so stupid, can give excellent advice in cases of difficulty. In Switzerland, in England, and in France, when catastrophe overtook me, she frequently saw what I had not myself perceived: she has often given me the best counsel I could possibly follow; she has rescued me from danger into which I had blindly precipitated myself; and in the presence of ladies of the highest rank, of princes and of the great, her sentiments, good sense, answers, and conduct have acquired her universal esteem, and myself the most sincere congratulations on her merit.

With persons whom we love, sentiment fortifies the mind as well as the heart; and they who are thus attached have little need of searching for ideas elsewhere. I lived with my Thérèse as agreeably as with the finest genius in the world. Her mother, proud of having been brought up under the Marquise de Monpipeau, attempted to be witty, wished to direct the judgment of her daughter, and, by her cunning ways, destroyed the simplicity of our intercourse. The fatigue of this importunity made me in some degree surmount the foolish shame which prevented me from appearing with Thérèse in public; and we took short country walks by ourselves, and partook of little collations, which to me were delicious. I perceived that she loved me sincerely, and this increased my tenderness. This charming intimacy superseded all else; futurity no longer gave me the least concern, or, at most, appeared only a prolongation of the present. I had no other desire than that of ensuring its duration.

This attachment rendered all other dissipation superfluous and insipid to me. I never went out but for the purpose of going to the apartment of Thérèse; her dwelling almost became my own. This retired mode of life was so favourable to the work I had undertaken that in less than three months my opera was entirely finished, both words and music, except a few accompaniments and fillings-up which still remained to be added. This mechanical sort of work was very irksome to me. I proposed it to Philidor, offering him, at the same time, a part of the profits. He came twice, and did something to the middle parts in the act of 'Ovid'; but he could not bind himself to an assiduous application by the allurement of advantages which were distant and uncertain. He did not come a third time, and I finished the work myself.

My opera completed, the next thing was to make something of it; this was by much the more difficult task of the two. A man living in solitude in Paris will never succeed in anything. I was on the point of making my way by means of Monsieur de La Poplinière, to whom Gauffecourt, on my return to Geneva, had introduced me. Monsieur de La Poplinière was the Mæcenas of Rameau, Madame de La Poplinière his very humble scholar. Rameau was said to govern in that house. Judging that he would with pleasure protect the work of one of his disciples, I wished to show him what I had done. He refused to examine it, saying he could not read scores; it was too fatiguing to him. Monsieur de La Poplinière, to obviate this difficulty, said he might hear it, and offered to send for musicians to execute detached pieces. I wished for nothing better. Rameau consented with an ill grace, incessantly repeating that the composition of a man not regularly bred to the science, and who had learned music without a master, must certainly be very fine! I hastened to copy into parts five or six select passages.

Ten symphonists were procured, and Albert, Bérard, and Mademoiselle Bourbonnais undertook the vocal parts. Rameau, the moment he heard the overture, began to make the company understand, by his extravagant eulogies, that it could not be my composition. He showed signs of impatience at every passage; but after a counter-tenor song, the air of which was noble and harmonious, with a brilliant accompaniment, he could no longer contain himself; he apostrophised me with a brutality at which everybody was shocked, maintaining that a part of what he had heard was by a man experienced in the art, and the rest by some ignorant person who did not so much as understand music. It is true my composition, unequal and without rule, was sometimes sublime and at others insipid, as that of a person who forms himself in an art by the inspiration of his own genius, unsupported by science, must necessarily be. Rameau pretended to see nothing in me but a contemptible pilferer, without talents or taste. The rest of the company, among whom I must distinguish the master of the house, were of a different opinion. Monsieur de Richelieu, who at that time frequently visited Monsieur and, as is well known, Madame de La Poplinière, heard of my work, and wished to hear the whole of it, with an intention, if it pleased him, to have it performed at Court. The opera was executed with full choruses, and a great orchestra, at the expense of the King, at Monsieur de Bonneval's intendant des menus. Francœur directed the band. The effect was surprising. Monsieur le Duc never ceased to exclaim and applaud; and, at the end of one of the choruses in the act of 'Tasso,' he rose and came to me, and, pressing my hand, said: 'Monsieur Rousseau, this is transporting harmony. I never heard anything finer. I will get this performed at Versailles.' Madame de La Poplinière, who was present, said not a

word. Rameau, although invited, had refused to come. The next day, Madame de La Poplinière received me at her toilette very ungraciously, affecting to undervalue my piece, and told me that although a little false glitter had at first dazzled Monsieur de Richelieu, he had recovered from his error, and she advised me not to place much dependence upon my opera. Monsieur le Duc arrived soon after, and spoke to me in quite a different language. He said very flattering things about my talents, and seemed as much disposed as ever to have my composition performed before the King. 'There is nothing,' said he, 'but the act of "Tasso" which cannot pass at Court. You must write another.' Upon this single word I shut myself up in my apartment; and in three weeks produced, in the place of 'Tasso,' another act, the subject of which was 'Hesiod inspired by one of the Muses.' Into this I found the secret of introducing a part of the history of my talents, and of the jealousy with which Rameau had been pleased to honour me. There was in the new act an elevation less gigantic and better sustained than in the act of 'Tasso.' The music was as noble and the composition better; and, had the other two acts been equal to this, the whole piece would have supported a representation to advantage. But whilst I was endeavouring to give it the last touches, another undertaking suspended the completion of that I had in hand.

[1745–1747.] In the winter which succeeded the battle of Fontenoy there were many fêtes at Versailles, and several operas performed at the Théâtre des Petites-Écuries. Among the number of the latter was the dramatic piece of Voltaire entitled *La Princesse de Navarre*, the music by Rameau, which had been altered and recast under the name of *Les Fêtes de Ramire*. This

new subject required several changes to be made in the divertissements, as well in the poetry as in the music. A person capable of both was now sought after. Voltaire, then in Lorraine, and Rameau, both of whom were employed on the opera of *Le Temple de la Gloire*, could not give their attention to this. Monsieur de Richelieu thought of me, and sent to desire I would undertake the alterations; and, that I might the better examine what there was to do, he gave me separately the poem and the music. In the first place, I would not touch the words without the consent of the author, to whom I wrote upon the subject a very polite and respectful letter, such a one as was proper; and received from him the following, the original of which is in packet A, No. 1: —

'*December 15th*, 1745.

'MONSIEUR, — In you two talents, which hitherto have always been separate, are united. These are two good reasons for me to esteem and to endeavour to love you. I am sorry, on your account, that you should employ these talents in a work which is so little worthy of them. A few months ago Monsieur le Duc de Richelieu commanded me to make, absolutely in the twinkling of an eye, a little and bad sketch of a few insipid and imperfect scenes to be adapted to divertissements which are not of a nature to be joined with them. I obeyed with the greatest exactness. I wrote very fast, and very ill. I sent this wretched production to Monsieur le Duc de Richelieu, imagining he would make no use of it, or that I should have an opportunity of correcting it. Happily it is in your hands, and you are at full liberty to do with it whatever you please. I have entirely lost sight of the thing. I doubt not but you will have corrected all the faults which cannot but abound in so hasty a composition of a simple sketch, and will have supplied whatever was wanting.

'I remember that, among other stupidities, no account is given in the scenes which connect the divertissements of the manner in which the Princess Grenadine immediately passes from a prison to a garden or palace. As it is not a magician but a Spanish nobleman who gives her the gala, I am of opinion

that nothing should be effected by enchantment. I beg, monsieur, that you will examine this part, of which I have but a confused idea. You will likewise consider whether or not it be necessary the prison should be opened, and the princess conveyed from it to a fine palace, gilt and varnished, and prepared for her. I know all this is wretched and that it is beneath a thinking being to make a serious affair of such trifles; but since we must displease as little as possible, it is necessary we should conform to reason, even in a bad divertissement of an opera.

'I depend wholly upon you and Monsieur Ballod, and soon expect to have the honour of returning you my thanks, and assuring you how much I am,' etc.

There is nothing surprising in the great politeness of this letter, compared with the almost rude ones which he has since written to me. He thought I was in great favour with Monsieur de Richelieu; and the courtly suppleness which every one knows to be the character of this author obliged him to be extremely polite to a newcomer, until he should become better acquainted with the measure of the patronage he enjoyed.

Authorised by Monsieur de Voltaire, and not under the necessity of giving myself the least concern about Rameau, who only endeavoured to injure me, I set to work, and in two months my undertaking was finished. With respect to the poetry, it was confined to a mere trifle. I aimed at nothing more than to prevent the difference of style from being perceived, and had the vanity to think I had succeeded. The musical part was longer and more laborious. Besides my having to compose several preparatory pieces, and amongst others the overture, all the recitative, with which I was charged, was extremely difficult on account of the necessity there was of connecting, in a few verses, and by very rapid modulations, symphonies and choruses, in keys very different from each other; for I was determined neither

to change nor transpose any of the airs, that Rameau might not accuse me of having disfigured them. I succeeded in the recitative; it was well accented, full of energy and excellent modulation. The idea of two men of superior talents with whom I was associated had elevated my genius, and I can assert that, in this barren and inglorious task, of which the public could have no knowledge, I was for the most part equal to my models.

The piece, in the state to which I had brought it, was rehearsed in the great theatre of the Opera. Of the three authors who had contributed to the production, I was the only one present. Voltaire was not in Paris, and Rameau either did not come, or concealed himself.

The words of the first monologue were very mournful; they began with —

'O mort! viens terminer les malheurs de ma vie.'

To these suitable music was necessary. It was, however, upon this that Madame de La Poplinière founded her censure, accusing me with much bitterness of having composed a funeral anthem. Monsieur de Richelieu very judiciously began by informing himself who was the author of the poetry of this monologue; I presented him the manuscript he had sent me, which proved it was by Voltaire. 'In that case,' said he, 'Voltaire alone is to blame.' During the rehearsal, everything I had done was disapproved by Madame de La Poplinière, and defended by Monsieur de Richelieu; but I had afterwards to do with too powerful an adversary. It was signified to me that several parts of my composition wanted revising, and that on these it was necessary I should consult Monsieur Rameau. My heart was wounded by such a conclusion, instead of the eulogium I expected, and which certainly I merited, and I returned to my apartment overwhelmed with grief, exhausted with fatigue,

and consumed by chagrin. I was immediately taken ill, and confined to my chamber for upwards of six weeks.

Rameau, who was charged with the alterations indicated by Madame de La Poplinière, sent to ask me for the overture of my great opera, to substitute it for that I had just composed. Happily I perceived the trick he intended to play me, and refused him the overture. As the performance was to be in five or six days, he had not time to make one, and was obliged to leave that which I had prepared. It was in the Italian taste, and in a style at that time quite new in France. Nevertheless, it gave satisfaction, and I learned from Monsieur de Valmalette, maître d'hôtel to the King, and son-in-law to Monsieur Mussard, my relation and friend, that the connoisseurs were highly satisfied with my work, and that the public had not distinguished it from that of Rameau. However, he and Madame de La Poplinière took measures to prevent any person from knowing I had any concern in the matter. In the books distributed to the audience, and in which the authors are always named, Voltaire was the only person mentioned, and Rameau preferred the suppression of his own name to seeing it associated with mine.

As soon as I was in a situation to leave my room, I wished to wait upon Monsieur de Richelieu, but it was too late; he had just set off for Dunkirk, where he was to command the expedition destined to Scotland. At his return, said I to myself, to authorise my idleness, it will be too late for my purpose. Not having seen him since, I lost the honour of my work and the emoluments it should have produced me, without reckoning my time, trouble, grief, and vexation, my illness, and the money this cost me, without ever receiving the least benefit, or rather recompense. However, I always thought Monsieur de Richelieu was disposed to serve me, and that he

had a favourable opinion of my talents; but my ill luck and Madame de La Poplinière prevented the effect of his good wishes.

I could not divine the reason of the aversion this lady had to me. I had always endeavoured to make myself agreeable to her, and regularly paid her my court. Gauffecourt explained to me the causes of her dislike. 'The first,' said he, 'is her friendship for Rameau, of whom she is the declared panegyrist, and who will not suffer a competitor; the next is an original sin, which ruins you in her estimation, and which she will never forgive: you are a Genevese.' Upon this he told me that the Abbé Hubert, who was from the same city, and the sincere friend of Monsieur de La Poplinière, had used all his efforts to prevent him from marrying this lady, with whose character he was very well acquainted; and that after the marriage she had vowed him an implacable hatred, as well as all the Genevese. 'Although La Poplinière has a friendship for you, and that is known to me, do not,' said he, 'depend upon his protection. He is still in love with his wife: she hates you, and is vindictive and artful: you will never make any progress in that house.' All this I took for granted.

This same Gauffecourt rendered me much about this time a service of which I stood in the greatest need. I had just lost my virtuous father, who was about sixty years of age. I felt this loss less severely than if it had happened at any other time, when the embarrassments of my situation had less engaged my attention. During his lifetime I had never claimed what remained of the property of my mother, and of which he received the little interest. His death removed all my scruples upon this subject. But the want of legal proof of my brother's death created a difficulty, which Gauffecourt undertook to remove, and this he effected by means of the

good offices of the advocate De Lolme. As I stood in need of this little resource, and the event being doubtful, I waited for a definite result with the greatest anxiety. One evening, on entering my apartment, I found a letter which I knew must contain the information I wanted, and I took it up with an impatient trembling, of which I was inwardly ashamed. 'What!' said I to myself with disdain, 'shall Jean-Jacques thus suffer himself to be subdued by interest and curiosity?' I immediately replaced the letter upon the chimneypiece. I undressed myself, went to bed with great composure, slept better than usual, and rose in the morning at a late hour, without thinking more of my letter. As I was dressing myself, it caught my eye. I broke the seal very leisurely, and found under the envelope a bill of exchange. I felt a variety of pleasing sensations at the same time; but I can swear that the most lively of them all was that proceeding from having known how to master myself. I could mention twenty such circumstances in my life, but I am too much pressed for time to say everything. I sent a small part of this money to my poor Mamma, regretting, with my eyes suffused with tears, the happy time when I should have laid it all at her feet. All her letters contained evident marks of distress. She sent me piles of recipes and secrets, with which she pretended I might make my fortune and her own. The idea of her wretchedness already affected her heart and contracted her mind. The little I sent her fell a prey to the knaves by whom she was surrounded; she received no advantage from anything. The idea of dividing what was necessary to my own subsistence with these wretches disgusted me; especially after the vain attempt I made to deliver her from them, and of which I shall have occasion to speak.

Time slipped away, and with it the little money I had; we were two, or indeed, four persons; or, to speak more

correctly, seven or eight. Although Thérèse was disinterested to a degree of which there are but few examples, her mother was not so. She was no sooner a little relieved from her necessities by my cares, than she sent for her whole family to partake of the fruits of them. Her sisters, sons, daughters, granddaughters — all, except her eldest daughter, married to the director of the Angers coaches — came to us. Everything I did for Thérèse her mother diverted from its original destination, in favour of these never-satisfied folk. As I had not to do with an avaricious person, and was not under the influence of an unruly passion, I was not guilty of follies. Satisfied with honestly supporting Thérèse, without luxury, and unexposed to pressing wants, I consented to let all the earnings of her industry go to the support of her mother; and to this even I did not confine myself; but, by a fatality by which I was pursued, whilst Mamma was a prey to the rascals about her, Thérèse was the same to her family: and I could not do anything on either side for the benefit of her to whom the succour was destined. It was odd enough that the youngest child of Madame Le Vasseur, the only one who had not received a marriage portion from her parents, should provide for their subsistence; and that, after having a long time been beaten by her brothers, sisters, and even her nieces, the poor girl should be plundered by them all, without being better able to defend herself from their thefts than from their blows. One of her nieces, named Goton Leduc, was of a mild and amiable character, although spoiled by the lessons and examples of the others. As I frequently saw them together, I gave them names which they gave to each other; I called the niece 'my niece,' and the aunt 'my aunt'; they both called me 'uncle.' Hence the name of 'aunt,' by which I continued to call Thérèse, and which my friends sometimes jocosely repeated.

It will be judged that in such a situation I had not a moment to lose before I attempted to extricate myself. Judging Monsieur de Richelieu had forgotten me, and having no more hopes from the Court, I made some attempts to get my opera brought out in Paris; but I met with difficulties which time alone could remove, and my situation became daily more painful. I presented my little comedy of *Narcisse* to the Italiens; it was received, and I had the freedom of the theatre, which gave me much pleasure. But this was all; I could never get my piece performed, and, tired of paying my court to players, I gave myself no more trouble about them. At length I had recourse to the last expedient which remained to me, and the only one of which I ought to have made use. While frequenting the house of Monsieur de La Poplinière, I had neglected the Dupin family. The ladies of the two households, although related, were not upon good terms, and never saw each other. There was not the least intercourse between the two families, and Thieriot was the only person who visited both. He was desired to endeavour to bring me again to Monsieur Dupin's. Monsieur de Francueil was then studying natural history and chemistry, and collecting a cabinet. I believe he aspired to become a member of the Academy of Sciences; to this effect he intended to write a book, and judged I might be of use to him in the undertaking. Madame Dupin, who, on her part, had another work in contemplation, had much the same views with respect to me. They wished to have me in common as a kind of secretary, and this was the reason of the invitations of Thieriot. I required in the first instance that Monsieur de Francueil should employ his interest with that of Jelyote to get my work rehearsed at the Opera. To this he consented. *Les Muses Galantes* was several times rehearsed, first at the *magasin*, and afterwards in the great

theatre. The audience was very numerous at the full rehearsal, and several parts of the composition were highly applauded. However, during this rehearsal — very ill conducted by Rebel — I felt that the piece would not be received, and that, before it could appear, great alterations were necessary. I therefore withdrew it without saying a word, or exposing myself to a refusal; but I plainly perceived, by many indications, that the work, had it been perfect, could not have succeeded. Monsieur de Francueil had promised me to get it rehearsed, but not that it should be received. He exactly kept his word. I thought I perceived on this occasion, as well as many others, that neither he nor Madame Dupin was willing that I should acquire a certain reputation in the world, lest, after the publication of their books, it should be supposed that they had grafted their talents upon mine. Yet, as Madame Dupin always supposed those I had to be very moderate, and never employed me save to write what she dictated, or in research of pure erudition, the reproach, in respect to her, would have been unjust.

[1747–1749.] This last failure completed my discouragement. I abandoned every prospect of fame and advancement; and, without further troubling my head about real or imaginary talents, with which I had so little success, I dedicated my whole time and cares to procure for myself and Thérèse a subsistence in the manner most pleasing to those to whom it should be agreeable to provide for it. I therefore entirely attached myself to Madame Dupin and Monsieur de Francueil. This did not place me in a very opulent situation; for, with eight or nine hundred francs a year, which I had the two first years, I had scarcely enough to provide for my primary wants, being obliged to live in their neighbour-

hood — a dear part of the town — in a furnished lodging, and having to pay for another lodging at the extremity of Paris, at the very top of the Rue Saint-Jacques, whither, let the weather be as it would, I went almost every evening to supper. I soon got into the track of my new occupations, and conceived a taste for them. I attached myself to the study of chemistry, and attended several courses of it with Monsieur de Francueil at Monsieur Rouelle's, and we began to scribble upon that science, of which we scarcely possessed the elements. In 1747 we went to pass the autumn in Touraine, at the Château de Chenonceaux, a royal mansion upon the Cher, built by Henry II. for Diane de Poitiers, of whom the ciphers are still visible, and which is now in the possession of Monsieur Dupin, a farmer-general. We amused ourselves very agreeably in this beautiful place, and lived very well. I became there as fat as a monk. Music was a favourite relaxation. I composed several trios for the voice, full of harmony, and of which I may perhaps speak in my supplement, if ever I should write one. Plays were acted there. I wrote a comedy in fifteen days, entitled *L'Engagement Téméraire*, which will be found amongst my papers; it has no other merit than that of being very sprightly. I composed several other little things; amongst others, a poem entitled *L'Allée de Sylvie*, from the name of a walk in the park upon the banks of the Cher; and this without discontinuing my chemical studies, or interrupting what I had to do for Madame Dupin.

Whilst I was increasing my corpulency at Chenonceaux, that of my poor Thérèse was augmented at Paris in another manner, and at my return I found the work I had put upon the frame in greater forwardness than I had expected. This, on account of my situation, would have thrown me into the greatest embarrassment, had

not my messmates furnished me with the only resource which could relieve me from it. This is one of those essential narratives which I cannot give with too much simplicity; because it is necessary, in commenting upon them, either to excuse or blame myself, and that here I should not do the one nor the other.

During the stay of Altuna at Paris, instead of taking our meals at a traiteur's, he and I commonly ate in our own neighbourhood, almost opposite the cul-de-sac of the Opera, at the house of one Madame La Selle, the wife of a tailor, who gave but poor dinners, but whose table was much frequented, on account of the respectability of the company which resorted to it. No person was received without being introduced by one of those who used the house. The Commandeur de Graville, an old debauchee, with much wit and politeness, but obscene in conversation, lodged at the house, and brought to it a set of riotous and dashing young men, officers in the Guards and Mousquetaires. The Commandeur de Nonant, chevalier to all the girls of the Opera, was the daily oracle which conveyed to us the news of this tavern. Monsieur du Plessis, a lieutenant-colonel retired from the service, an old man of great goodness and wisdom; and Monsieur Ancelet, [1] an officer in the Mousquetaires, kept the young people in a certain kind of order. The table was

[1] It was to this Monsieur Ancelet that I gave a little comedy, after my own manner, entitled *Les Prisonniers de Guerre*, which I wrote after the disasters of the French in Bavaria and Bohemia. I dared not either avow this comedy or show it, and this for the singular reason that neither the King of France, nor France itself, nor the French, were ever better spoken of, nor praised with more sincerity of heart than in this piece; and that, republican and avowed *frondeur* as I was, I dared not declare myself the panegyrist of a nation whose maxims were exactly the reverse of my own. More grieved at the misfortunes of France than the French themselves, I was afraid the public would construe into flattery and cowardice the marks of a sincere attachment of which in my First Part I have mentioned the date and the cause, and which I was ashamed to show. — R.

also frequented by commercial people, financiers, and army contractors, but extremely polished and upright, and such as were distinguished amongst those of the same profession; Monsieur de Besse, Monsieur de Forcade, and others whose names I have forgotten. In short, well-dressed people of every description were seen there, except abbés and men of the long robe, not one of whom I ever met in the house, and it was agreed not to introduce men of either of these professions. This table, sufficiently resorted to, was very cheerful without being noisy, and many of the guests were waggish, without descending to grossness. The old Commandeur, with all his indelicate stories, with respect to their substance, never lost sight of the politeness of the Old Court; nor did any indecent expression which women would not have pardoned him escape his lips. His manner served as a rule to every person at table. All the young men related their adventures of gallantry with equal grace and freedom, and these narratives were the more complete as the seraglio was at the very door, for in the alley leading to Madame de La Selle's was the shop of La Duchapt, a celebrated dressmaker, who employed some very pretty damsels, with whom our young gentlemen went to chat before or after dinner. I should thus have amused myself as well as the rest, had I been a little bolder. I had only to go in as they did, but this I dared not do. With respect to Madame La Selle, I often went to eat at her house after the departure of Altuna. I learned there a great number of amusing anecdotes, and by degrees I adopted, thank God, not the morals, but the maxims I found to be established there. Honest men injured, husbands deceived, women seduced, secret lyings-in, were the most ordinary topics, and he who had best filled the Enfants-Trouvés was always the most applauded. I caught the manners I daily had before my

eyes; I formed my manner of thinking upon that which I observed to be the reigning one amongst amiable and, upon the whole, very honourable people. I said to myself, 'Since it is the custom of the country, they who live here may adopt it. This is the expedient for which I sought.' I cheerfully determined upon it without the least scruple, and the only one I had to overcome was that of Thérèse, whom, with the greatest imaginable difficulty, I persuaded to adopt this only means of saving her honour. Her mother, who was moreover apprehensive of a new embarrassment by an increase of family, came to my aid, and she at length suffered herself to be prevailed upon. We made choice of a midwife, a safe and prudent woman, Mademoiselle Gouin, who lived at the Pointe Saint-Eustache, to intrust with this business; and when the time came Thérèse was conducted by her mother to La Gouin's house, there to remain during her confinement. I went thither several times to see her, and gave her a cipher which I had duplicated upon two cards; one of them was put into the linen of the child, and by the midwife deposited with the infant in the office of the Enfants-Trouves, according to the customary form. The year following a similar inconvenience was remedied by the same expedient, excepting the cipher, which was forgotten: no more reflection on my part, nor approbation on that of the mother; she obeyed with trembling. All the vicissitudes which this fatal conduct has produced in my manner of thinking, as well as in my destiny, will be successively seen. For the present we will confine ourselves to this first period: its cruel and unforeseen consequences will but too frequently oblige me to refer to it.

I may here mark my first acquaintance with Madame d'Épinay, whose name will frequently appear in these memoirs. She was a Mademoiselle d'Esclavelles, and

had lately been married to Monsieur d'Épinay, son of Monsieur de Lalive de Bellegarde, of Berne, a farmer-general. Her husband, like Monsieur de Francueil, was a musician. She too understood music, and a passion for the art produced between these three persons the greatest intimacy. Monsieur de Francueil introduced me to Madame d'Épinay, and we sometimes supped together at her house. She was amiable, had wit and talent, and was certainly a very desirable acquaintance; but she had a female friend, a Mademoiselle d'Ette, who was said to have much malignancy in her disposition; she lived with the Chevalier de Valory, whose temper was far from being one of the best. I am of opinion that an acquaintance with these two persons was prejudicial to Madame d'Épinay, to whom, with an exacting disposition, nature had given very excellent qualities to regulate or counterbalance her extravagances. Monsieur de Francueil inspired her with a part of the friendship he had conceived for me, and told me of the close connection between them, of which, for that reason, I would not now speak were it not become so public as not to be concealed from Monsieur d'Épinay himself. Monsieur de Francueil, indeed, confided to me secrets of a very singular nature relative to this lady, of which she herself never spoke to me, nor so much as suspected my having a knowledge of them; for I never opened my lips to her upon the subject, nor will I ever do so to any person.[1] The confidence that all parties had in my prudence rendered my situation very embarrassing, especially with Madame de Francueil, whose knowledge of me was sufficient to remove from her all suspicion on my account, although I was connected with her rival. I did everything I could to console this poor woman, whose husband cer-

[1] Madame d'Épinay's *Memoirs*, published many years afterwards, contain some curious particulars on this subject.

tainly did not return the affection she had for him. I listened to these three persons separately, and I kept all their secrets so faithfully that not one of the three ever drew from me those of the two others; and this without concealing from either of the women my attachment for her rival. Madame de Francueil, who frequently wished to make me an agent, received formal refusals, and Madame d'Épinay once desiring me to charge myself with a letter to Francueil, received the same rebuff, accompanied by a very express declaration that if she wished to drive me for ever from the house she had only a second time to make me a like proposition. In justice to Madame d'Épinay, I must say, that far from being offended with me, she spoke of my conduct to Francueil in terms of the highest approbation, and continued to receive me as cordially as ever. It was thus, amidst the heartburnings of three persons, to whom I was obliged to behave with circumspection, on whom I in some measure depended and for whom I had conceived an attachment, that, by conducting myself with mildness and complaisance, although accompanied with the greatest firmness, I preserved unto the last, not only their friendship, but their esteem and confidence. Notwithstanding my stupidity and awkwardness, Madame d'Épinay would have me make one of a party to La Chevrette, a country-house near Saint-Denis, belonging to Monsieur de Bellegarde. There was a theatre, in which performances were not infrequent. I had a part given me, which I studied for six months without intermission, and in which, on the evening of the representation, I was obliged to be prompted from the beginning to the end. After this experiment no second proposal of the kind was made to me.

My acquaintance with Madame d'Épinay procured me that of her sister-in-law, Mademoiselle de Bellegarde,

who soon afterwards became Comtesse de Houdetot. The first time I saw her she was upon the point of marriage, when she conversed with me for a long time with that charming familiarity which was natural to her. I thought her very amiable, but I was far from foreseeing that this young person would lead me, although innocently, into the abyss in which I now am.

Although I have not spoken of Diderot since my return from Venice, nor yet of my friend Monsieur Roguin, I had not neglected either of them, especially the former, with whom I daily became more intimate. He had a Nanette, as well as I a Thérèse; this was between us another bond of conformity. But there was this difference: my Thérèse, as fine a woman as his Nanette, was of a mild and amiable character, which might gain and fix the affections of a worthy man; whereas his Nanette was a vixen, a troublesome prater, and had no qualities in the eyes of others which in any measure compensated for her want of education. However, he married her, which was well done of him, if he had given a promise to that effect. I, for my part, not having entered into any such engagement, was not in any haste to imitate him.

I was also connected with the Abbé de Condillac, who had acquired no more literary fame than myself, but in whom there was every appearance of his becoming what he now is. I was, perhaps, the first who discovered the extent of his abilities, and esteemed them as they deserved. He on his part seemed satisfied with me, and whilst shut up in my chamber in the Rue Jean-Saint-Denis, near the Opera, composing my act of 'Hesiod,' he sometimes came to dine with me *tête-à-tête*, and take what was going. We sent for our dinner, and paid share and share alike. He was at that time employed on his *Essai sur l'Origine des Connaissances Humaines*, which

was his first work. When this was finished, the difficulty was to find a bookseller who would take it. The booksellers of Paris are arrogant and rude towards every author at his beginning, and metaphysics, not much then in vogue, was no very inviting subject. I spoke to Diderot of Condillac and his work; and I afterwards brought them acquainted with each other. They were worthy of each other's esteem, and were presently on the most friendly terms. Diderot persuaded the bookseller Durand to take the manuscript from the Abbé, and this great metaphysician received for his first work, and almost as a favour, a hundred écus, which perhaps he would not have obtained without my assistance. As we lived in quarters of the town very distant from each other, we all assembled, once a week, at the Palais-Royal, and went to dine at the Hôtel du Panier Fleuri. These little weekly dinners must have been extremely pleasing to Diderot, for he, who failed in almost all his appointments, never missed one of these. I formed at this time the plan of a periodical paper, entitled *Le Persifleur*, which Diderot and I were to write alternately. I sketched out the first sheet, and this brought me acquainted with D'Alembert, to whom Diderot mentioned it. Unforeseen events frustrated our intention, and the project was carried no further.

These two authors had just undertaken the *Dictionnaire Encyclopédique*, which at first was intended to be nothing more than a kind of translation of Chambers, something like that of James's *Medical Dictionary*, which Diderot had just finished. The latter was desirous that I should do something in this second undertaking, and proposed to me the musical part, which I accepted. This I executed in great haste, and consequently very ill, in the three months he had allowed me, as well as all the authors who were engaged on the work. But I was the

only person in readiness at the time prescribed. I gave him my manuscript, which I had caused to be copied by a lackey belonging to Monsieur de Francueil, named Dupont, who wrote very well. I paid him ten écus out of my own pocket, and these have never been reimbursed me. Diderot had promised me a recompense on the part of the booksellers, of which he has never since spoken to me, nor I to him.

This undertaking of the *Encyclopédie* was interrupted by his imprisonment. The *Pensées Philosophiques* had drawn upon him some temporary inconvenience, which had no disagreeable consequences. He did not come off so easily on account of the *Lettre sur les Aveugles*, in which there was nothing reprehensible but some personal attacks with which Madame Dupré de Saint-Maur and Monsieur de Réaumur were displeased; for this he was confined in the donjon of Vincennes. Nothing can describe the anguish I felt on account of the misfortune of my friend. My wretched imagination, which always sees everything in the worst light, was terrified. I imagined him there for the remainder of his life. I was almost distracted with the thought. I wrote to Madame de Pompadour, beseeching her to release him, or to obtain an order to lock me up with him. I received no answer to my letter. It was too unreasonable to be efficacious, and I do not flatter myself that it contributed to the alleviation which some time afterwards was granted to the severities of poor Diderot's imprisonment. Had this continued for any length of time with the same rigour, I verily believe I should have died in despair at the foot of that hated donjon. However, if my letter produced but little effect, I did not on account of it attribute to myself much merit, for I mentioned it but to very few people, and never to Diderot himself.

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